

THE SCALE  
(OR LADDER)  
OF  
PERFECTION,

Written by

WALTER HILTON.

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*Moses plus profecit in monte adorando quam  
multitudo magna bellantium.*

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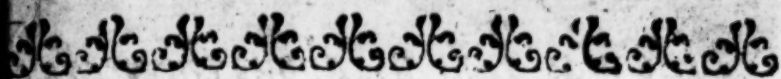
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**W**alter Hilton *was an English Carthusian Monke, of the Monasterie (as it seems) built by Henry the fifth, King of England, on the other side of Thames, over against Sion, and called Bethleem. I gather him to have been D<sup>r</sup>. in Divinity, because in the Titles of his Writings for the most part he is honoured with the name of M<sup>r</sup>. A man eminent for piety and learning; and according to his rule (which he strictly observed) always attentive to the assiduous Contemplation of divine matters. Which thing, though all Authors should have been silent in, yet his writings would have sufficiently proclaimed, and the very titles of his Tractates extant do evidence.*

*He was famous about the yeare of  
our Lord 1433. in the Reign of  
Henry the sixth,*

---

*He writ these B O O K S.*

De Origine Religionis,	lib
De Utilitate ejusdem,	lib.
De prærogativa ejusdem,	lib.
De Contemplatione,	lib.
Baculum Contemplationis,	lib.
Scala spiritualis perfectionis,	li.
De Communi Vita ad Laicum	lib.
De Ascensionibus spiritualibus.	
De Sacris Imaginibus.	
De Idolo Cordis,	lib.
De Musica Ecclesiastica.	
In Psalmos poenitentiales.	

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is good, and on the contrary, every spirit that denyeth  
or looseth the soule from Jesus is bad; what it is that knit-  
teth a soule to Jesus, and what looseth it. Ibid.



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# PART I. CHAP. I.

*That the inward state of the  
SOUL should be like  
the outward.*



Hostly Sister in Christ Jesus, I pray thee that in the calling to which our Lord hath called thee for his service, thou rest contented, & abide constantly therein, travelling busily with all the powers of thy soul, to fulfill in truth of good life (by the grace of Christ Jesus) the state which thou hast taken in exterior likenesse and seeming: And as thou hast forsaken the World, as it were a dead man, and turned to our Lord bodily in sight of men, so thou be in thy heart as it were dead to all earthly loves and fears, and turned wholly to our Lord Jesus Christ: For be thou well assured, that a bodily turning God, without the heart following, is but a figure and likenesse of vertues, and not the truth it selfe. Wherefore wretched men and women are they, who neglecting the care of their interior, shew onely exteriorly a forme and likenesse of holinesse, in habit or cloathing, in speech and outward carriage and works, casting their eyes upon other mens deeds, and judging their defects, esteeming themselves to be something, when indeed they are just nothing, and so deceive themselves. Do not thou so, but together with thy body, turne principally thy heart to God, and frame thy interior to his likenesse, by humility and charity, and other spirituell vertues, and then art thou truly turned to him.

## *The scale of perfection.*

I say not that thou mayest early on the first day be turned to him in thy soule in perfection of vertues, as thou mayest with thy body be inclosed in a house; but my meaning is, that thou shouldst know, that the end of thy bodily inclosure is that thou mightest thereby the better come, to a spirituall inclosure; and even as thy body is inclosed from bodily converse with men, even so thine heart might be inclosed from the inordinate loves and feares of all earthly things. And that thou mayest the better come thereto, I shall in this little Treatise yield thee the best instructions and helps that I know, or can.

---

### CHAP. II.

*Of the Active life, and the exercises and workes thereof.*

**T**Hou must understand that there are in the holy Church, two manner of lives (as saith St. Gregory) in which a Christian is to be saved. The one is called *Active*, the other *Contemplative*; without living one of these two lives, no man may be saved. The *Active* consisteth in love and charity exercised exteriorly by good corporall works, in fulfilling of Gods commandments, and of the seven works of mercy corporall and spirituall towards our Christian brethren. This life pertains to all worldly men, that have riches and plenty of worldly goods to dispose of, and to all those (be they learned or unlearned, Lay-men or spiritual persons) that are in office or state to govern, or have care of others; & generally all worldly men are bound to the practice of this kinde of life according to their best knowledge and ability, and as reason and discretion shall require. If he much good have, then much good for to doe; if he little have, lesse may he doe; and if he naught have, then must he have a good will. Such workes as these (be they corporall or spirituall)



## The scale of perfection.

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ruall) are works of the *Active* life. Also a great part of it consists in great bodily deeds which a man exerciseth upon himselfe, as great fasting, much watching, and other sharpe penance, to chastise the flesh with discretion, for sins formerly committed: As also to mortifie thereby the lusts and likings of the flesh, and to make it \* pliable and obedient to the will of the spirit. These works though they be but *active*, yet they helpe very much, and dispose a man in the beginning to attain afterwards to contemplation, if they be used with discretion. \* *Buxome.*

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### CHAP. III.

*Of the Contemplative life, and the Exercises  
and workes thereof.*

Contemplative life consisteth in perfect love and Charity, felt inwardly by spirituall vertues: and in a true and certain sight and knowledge of God and spirituall matters. This life belongs to them especially, who for the love of God forsake all worldly riches, honours, worships and outward busineses, and wholly give themselves, soule and body (according to all the knowledge and ability that is in them) to the service of God, by exercises of the soul.

Now then, since it is so (Deare Sister) that the quality of thy state requireth of thee to be contemplative (for that is the intent of thy inclosing, that thou mightest more freely and entirely apply thy selfe to spirituall exercisings) it behoveth thee to be right busie both night and day in labour of body and spirit, to attaine as nigh as thou canst to that life, by such meanes as thou mayest find to be best for the said end. But before I tell thee of the means, I shall tell thee a little more of this Contemplative life, that thou mayest some-what see what it is, and so set it as a marke in the sight of thy soule, whereto thou shalt tend, and direct all thy exercises and doings.



## CHAP. IV.

*Of three sorts that be of Contemplation, and of the first of them.*

**C**ontemplative life hath three parts; The first consisteth in knowing of GOD, and of spirituall things gotten by reason, and discourse; by teaching of man, and by study in holy Scriptures, without spirituall gust, or affection, or inward relish felt by them; for they have it not by the speciall gift of the holy Ghost, as persons truly spirituall have their knowledge, which therefore is very tastfull to them in their interior.

This part have specially in them learned men and great Scholars, who through long study and travel in holy Writ, attaine to this knowledge more or lesse by the abilities of their naturall wit, which God giveth to every one more or lesse, that hath use of reason.

This knowledge is good, and may be called a kind of part of Contemplation, in as much as it is a sight of Verity, and a knowledge of spirituall things. Nevertheless it is but a figure and shadow of true Contemplation since it hath no spirituall gust or taste of GOD, nor inward sweetnesse, which none feel but he that is in great love or charity; for it is the proper Well or Spring of our Lord, to which no Alien is admitted. But the aforesaid manner of knowledge is common both to good and bad, seeing it may be had without Charity, and therefore it is not true contemplation. Of this kinde of knowledge St. Paul 1 Cor. 13. speaketh thus: *If I knew all mysteries, and all knowledge, and have not charity, I am nothing.*

Nevertheless if they that have it keepe themselves in humility and charity, and according to the

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might flye Worldly and Fleahly finnes, it is to them a good way, and a great disposing to true *Contemplation*, if they desire and pray devoutly after the grace of the holy Ghost. Other men that have this knowledge, and turne it to pride and vain-glory, or unto coveteousnesse and desire of worldly Dignities, Worships, and Riches, not humbly using it to the glory of God, nor charitably to the soules good of their Brethren; Some of them fall either into heresies and Errours, or into other open finnes, by which they discredit themselves and the holy Church. Of this knowledge St. Paul speaks in these words: *Knowledge puffeth up, but Charity edifies.* This knowledge alone listeth up the heart to pride; but mixe it with Charity, and then it turnes to edification.

I Cor. 8.

This knowledge alohe is but water unsavoury and cold: And therefore if they that have it, would humbly offer it up to our LORD, and pray for his grace, he would by his blessing turne their Water into Wine, as he did at the prayer of his Mother at the Marriage Feast; that is to say, he would turne their unsavoury knowledge into true wisdom, and their cold naked reason into spirituall Light, and burning Love, by the gift of the holy Ghost.

*How learned men may become pious.*

## CHAP. V.

*Of the second sort of Contemplation.*

**T**He second part of *Contemplation* lyeth principally in affection, without spirituall light in the understanding or sight of spirituall things: and this is commonly of simple and unlearned men, who give themselves wholly to Devotion, and is had and felt on this manner; When man or woman being in meditation of God, through the grace of the holy Ghost, seeleth servour of love and spirituall sweetnesse, by occasion of thinking of Christs passion, or of some of the workes done by him in his humanity; or he feelleth cause of great trust in the goodnesse and mercy of God for the forgivenesse of his sinnes, or admires the liberality of his gifts of grace, or else seeleth in his affection a certain reverentiall fear towards God, and his secret judgements and justice, which yet he seeth not; or being in prayer, he findeth all the powers of his soule to be gathered together, and the thought and love of his heart to be drawn up from all transitory things, \* *upstying.* aspiring and tending upwards towards God, by a fervent desire, and spirituall delight, and yet neverthelesse during that time, he hath no plain sight in the understanding of spirituall things, nor in particular of any of the mysteries or senses of the holy Scriptures; but onely that for that time, nothing seemeth so pleasing and delightfull to him, as to pray, or thinke as he then doth, for the savory delight and comfort that he findeth therein, and yet cannot he tell what it is, but he seeleth it well, for it is a gift of God, for out of it spring many sweet teares, burning desires, and still mournings, or contrition for sin, which scour and cleanse the heart from all filth of sin, and causeth it to melt into a wonderfull sweetnesse in Jesus Christ, and to become \* *Buxome.* obedient, for

## The scale of perfection.

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ple, and ready to fulfill all Gods will, in so much that it seems to him he makes no reckoning what becomes of himselfe, so that Gods will were fulfilled in him, and by him, with many other such good inspirations and desires which cannot be reckoned. Such feelings as these cannot be had without great grace, and who so hath any of them or other such like, he is at that time in charity and the grace of God; which charity, let him know to his comfort, will not be lost, nor lessened in him (though the fervour thereof may abate) but by a deadly sin. And this may be called the second part of *Contemplation*, nevertheless this part hath two degrees.

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### CHAP. VI.

*Of the lower degree of the second sort of Contemplation.*

**T**He lower degree of this feeling, men which are active may have by grace, when they are visited of our Lord, as mightily and as fervently as they that give themselves wholly to *Contemplation*, and have this gift. But this feeling in his fervour cometh not alway when a man would, nor lasteth it full long; It cometh and goeth as he will that giveth it: And therefore who so hath it, let him be humble, and thank God, and keep it secret, unlesse it be to his Confessor, and let him hold it as long as he may with discretion; and when it is with-drawn, let him not be daunted or troubled, but abide constant in the light of Faith, an humble hope, with patient expecting till it come again. This is a little tasting of the sweetnesse of the love of God, whereof David saith thus in the Psalms: *Gustate & videte quoniam suavis est Dominus, Taste and see how sweet our Lord is.* Psal. 33.



## CHAP. VII.

*Of the higher degree of the second sort of  
Contemplation.*

**T**He higher degree of this part may not be had nor held, but of them which be in great rest and quiet both of body and minde, who by the grace of JESUS, and long travell corporall and spirituall, are arrived to a rest and quietnesse of heart and cleannesse of conscience: So that nothing is so pleasing to them as to sit still in quiet of body, and to pray alwayes to GOD, and to thinke on our LORD, and sometime on the blessed Name of JESUS, which is comfortable and delightfull to them, by the remembring whereof, they feelee themselves moved and fed in their affection towards God. And not onely the said Name, but also all other kinde of prayers (as the Pater Noster, the Ave, the Hymnes and Psalmes; and other devout prayers and sayings of holy Church) are turned as it were into a spirituall mirth and sweet songs, by which they are comforted & strengthened against all sins, and much relieved in their bodily pains or diseases. Of this degree Ephes. 5. speaketh Saint Paul thus: *Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Holy Ghost, speaking to your selves in Psalmes, and Hymnes, and spirituall Songs, making melody in your hearts to our Lord.* Who so hath this grace, let him keepe himselfe in humility, and be ever desiring to come to more knowledge and feeling of God, which is to be had in the third sort of Contemplation.

## CHAP. VIII.

Of the third sort of Contemplation.

**T**He third sort ( which is as perfect Contemplation as can be had in this life ) consisteth both in knowing and affecting ; that is , in knowing and perfect loving of God , which is , when a mans soule is first reformed by perfection of Vertues to the image of Jesus , and afterwards , when it pleaseth God to visit him , he is taken in from all earthly and fleshly affections , from vaine thoughts and imaginings of all bodily creatures , and as it were much ravished and taken up from his bodily senses , and then by the grace of the holy Ghost is enlightned , to see by his understanding Truth it selfe ( which is God ) and spirituall things , with a soft sweet burning love in God , so perfectly , that he becometh ravished with his love , and so the soule for the time is become one with God , and conformed to the image of the Trinity.

The beginning of this Contemplation may be felt in this life , but the full perfection of it is reserved unto the blisse in Heaven. Of this Union and conforming to our Lord, speaks St. Paul, thus, *Qui adhæret Deo unus spiritus est cum eo*, that is to say, he who by ravishing of love is become united to God , God and that soul are not now two, but both one. And surely in this *Oneing* consisteth the marriage which passeth betwixt God and the soule , that shall never be dissolved or broken.

1 Cor. 6.  
17.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IX.

*Of the difference that is betwixt the second and third sort of Contemplation.*

**T**He foresaid second sort of *Contemplation* may be tearmed a burning love in Devotion, and is the lower. This third a burning love in *Contemplation*, and is the higher. That is sweeter to the bodily feeling, this to the spirituall feeling inwardly, and is more worthy, more spirituall, more wonderfull; For indeed it is a fore-tast (so little as it is) and an earnest or handsell of the sight or *Contemplation* of heavenly joy, not clearly, but halfe in darknesse, which shall be perfected, and made a cleare light and sight in the blisse of heaven; as St. Paul saith, *Now*  
 1 Cor. 13. *we see as through a glasse darkely, but then we shall see face to face.* This is the inlightning of the understanding in delights of loving, whereof David saith in the Psalter: *Et nox illuminatio mea in deliciis meis, My night is my light in my delight.* The other is milke for children, but this solid meate for perfect men, that have their senses exercised (as St. Paul saith) for the discerning of good from evill.

To the perfection of this high *Contemplation* may no man come, till he be first reformed in soule to the likenesse of Jesus in the perfection of vertues, nor can any man living in mortal body have it continually and habitually in the height of it, but by times when he is visited; And as I conceive by the writing of holy men, it is a full short time, for soon after he returneth to a sobriety of bodily feeling; and of all this work charity is the cause. Thus, as I understand, St. Paul speaks of himselfe; *For whether we be besides our selves it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause; it is the love of Christ that constraineth us; that is, whether we overpasse our bodily senses in Contemplation, or we are more sober to you in our bodily feeling, the love*  
 2 Cor. 5.  
 13, 14. of

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of Christ streineth us. Of this part of *Contemplation*, and of reforming to God, speaketh St. Paul openly thus: *But we all with open face, beholding as in a glasse the glory of our Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.* 2 Cor. 3. 18. Which is as much as if in the person of himself, and all perfect men he had said thus: We, first being reformed in Vertues, and having the face of our soule uncovered by opening of our spirituall eye, behold as in a mirrour the heavenly joy, being withall full-shaped and oned to the image of our Lord, from cleannesse of faith into cleannesse of understanding, or else from cleannesse of desire into that of blessed love: and all this is wrought in a mans soule by the spirit of our Lord, as saith St. Paul.

This part of *Contemplation* God giveth where he will, to learned and unlearned, to men and to women, to them that are in government, and to solitary also. But it is speciall and not common: And although a man, who all his life time is active, happen to have the gift of it through speciall grace or favour, yet the fullnesse of it may no man have, but he that is solitary, and in life contemplative.

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### CHAP. X.

*How that appearings or shewings to the Corporall senses or feelings may be both good and evill.*

BY this that I have said may you some-what understand, that Visions, or Revelations, or any manner of spirit in bodily appearing, or in imagining, sleeping or wakeing, or also any other feeling in the bodily sense, made as it were spiritually, either by sounding in the eare, or savouring in the mouth, or smelling at the nose, or else any sensible heate, as it were fire glowing and warming the breast, or any other part of the body, or any other thing that may be felt



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\* *Wit.*

\* *In re-  
ward.*

felt by bodily \* sense, though it be never so comfortable and liking, yet be they not very *Contemplation*, but simple and secondary ( though they be good ) \* in respect of spirituall vertues, and of this spirituall knowing and loving of God accompanying true *Contemplation*. But all such manner of feeling may be good, wrought by a good Angell, and they may be deceivable, wrought by a wicked Angell, when he *transfigureth himselfe into an Angell of Light*. Wherefore sith they may be both good and evill, it appeareth they are not the best. For marke ye well, that the Devill may, when he hath leave, counterfeit in bodily feeling the likenesse of the same things, the which a good Angell may worke; for just as a good Angell cometh with light, so can the Devill. And as he can do this in matters of seeing, so can he doe it in matters of the other senses. Who so hath felt both, he can well tell which were good and which were evil: But he that never felt either, or else but one of them, may easily be deceived

These two be alike in the manner of feeling outwardly, but they are full different within; and therefore they are not to be desired greatly, nor to be entertained lightly, unlesse a soule can by the spirit of discretion know the good from the evill, that he be not beguiled, as St. John saith; *Trust not every spirit, but assay first whether it be of God or no*. Wherefore by one tryal that I shall tell thee, methinketh thou shalt know the good from the evill.

1 Joh. 4. 1.

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### CHAP. XI.

*How thou shalt know whether the shewing or apparition to the bodily senses and feeling  
be good or evill.*

**I**F it be so that thou see any manner of light or brightness with thy bodily eye or in imagination, other then every man seeth; or if thou hear any pleasant wonderful

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derful sounding with thy eare, or in thy mouth any sweet sudden savour, other then what thou knowest to be naturall, or any heate in thy breast like fire, or any manner of delight in any part of thy body, or if a spirit appeare bodily to thee, as it were an Angell to comfort thee or teach thee; or if any such feeling, which thou knowest well that it cometh not of thy self, nor from any bodily creature, beware in that time, or soone after, and wisely consider the stirrings of thy heart; for if by occasion of the pleasure & liking thou takest in the said feeling or vision, thou seelest thy heart drawn from the minding and beholding of Jesus Christ, and from spiritual exercises, as from prayer, and thinking of thy self and thy defects, or from the inward desire of vertues, and of spiritual knowing and feeling of God, for to set the sight of thy heart, and thy affection, thy delight and thy rest, principally on the said feelings or visions, supposing that to be a part of heavenly joy or Angels blisse, and thereupon comest to think that thou shouldst neither pray, nor think of any thing else, but wholly attend thereto, for to keep it, and delight thy selfe therein: Then is this feeling very suspicious to come from the enemy; and therefore though it be never so liking and wonderful, refuse it, and assent not thereto; for this is a sleight of the enemy. When he seeth a soule that would intirely give it selfe to spiritual exercises, he is wonderfully wroth; for he hateth nothing more then to see a soule in this body of sin to feel verily the savour of spiritual knowledge and the love of God, which he himself, without the body of sin lost wilfully: And therefore if he cannot hinder him by open sinning, he will let and beguile him by such vanity of bodily favours or sweetnesse in the senses, to bring a soule into spirituall pride, & into a false \* security of himselfe, weening that he had thereby a feeling of heavenly joy, and that he is halfe in Paradise, by reason of the delight he feelerh about him, when indeed he is near to hell gates: and so by pride & presumption he might fall into errours or heresies, or phantasies, or other bodily or spiritual mischiefs.

\* Sikernes.

But

## The scale of perfection.

But if it be so, that this manner of feeling let not thy heart from spirituall exercises, but maketh thee more devout, and more fervent to pray, more wise to thinke ghostly thoughts; And though it be so that it astonish thee in the beginning, neverthelesse afterward it turneth and quickneth thy heart to more desire of vertues, and encreaseth thy love more to God and to thy Neighbour, also it maketh thee more humble in thy own eyes. By these tokens mayest thou know that it is of God, wrought by the presence and working of a good Angel, and cometh from the goodness of God, either for the comfort of simple devout soules, for to encrease their trust and desire towards God, to seek thereby the knowing and loving of God more perfectly, by meanes of such comforts: Or else if they be perfect that feel such delight, it seemeth to them to be an earnest, and as it were a shadow of the glorifying of the body, which it shall have in the blisse of heaven; But I wote not whether there be any such man living on earth. This priviledge had *Mary Magdalen* (as it seemeth to me) in the time when shee was alone in the Cave thirty years, and every day was borne up with Angels, and was fed both body and soule by their presence, as we read in her story.

Of this way of discerning the working of spirits, **1 Joh. 4.3.** speaketh St. *John* in his Epistle, thus: *Omnis spiritus qui solvit Iesum hic non est ex Deo, Every spirit that looseth or unknitteth Jesus, he is not of God.* These words (I confesse) may be understood in many manners, neverthelesse one way I may understand them to this purpose, as I have said. This knitting and fastning of Jesus to a mans soule is wrought by a good will, and a great desire to him, onely to have him, and see him in his blisse spiritually. The greater this desire is, the faster is Jesus knit to the soule; and the lesse this desire is, the looser is he knit, whatsoever spirit therefore or feeling it is, which lesneth this desire, and would draw it downe from the stedfast minding of Jesus Christ, and from the kindly \* breathing or aspiring up to him, this spirit will unknit Jesus from the

\* *Stying*  
up.

the



the soule, and therefore is not of God, but is the working of the enemy. But if a spirit, or a feeling, or a Revelation make this desire more, knitting the knots of love and devotion faster to Jesus, opening the eye of the soule into spirituall knowing more clearly, and maketh it more humble in it selfe, this spirit is of God.

And hereby you may learn that you are not to suffer your heart willingly to rest nor to delight wholly in any such bodily feelings of such manner of comforts or sweetnesse, though they were good; but rather hold them in your sight nought, or little in comparison of spirituall desire and stedfast thinking on Jesus; nor shall you fasten the thought of your heart over-much on them.

## CHAP. XII.

*How, and in what things a Contemplative man should be busied.*

**B**UT thou shalt ever seeke with great diligence in prayer that thou mayest come to a spiritual feeling or sight of God; And that is, that thou mayest know the wisdom of God, the endlesse might of him, his great goodnesse in himselfe, and in his creatures; for this is *Contemplation*, and that other mentioned is none, thus saith St. Paul: *Being rooted and grounded in charity, we may be able to comprehend with all the Saints what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth.* That ye may know, he saith not, by sound of the eare, nor sweet savour in the mouth, nor by any such bodily thing, but that yee may know and feele with all Saints, what is the length of the endlesse being of God, the breadth of the wonderfull charity and the goodnesse of God, the height of his Almighty Majestie, and the bottomlesse depth of his wisdom. In knowing and spirituall feeling of these, should be the exercise of a contemplative man; For in these may be

Ephes. 3.  
18.



be understood the full knowing of all ghostly things. This Exercise is that one thing which St. Paul coveted Phil. 3. 13. after, saying thus : *This one thing I covet, which is, that, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth to those things that are before, I press to the marke of the supernall vocation.* Which is as much as if he had said, One thing is best for me to covet, and that is, that I might forget all things that be behinde or backward, and I shall stretch out my heart ever forward, for to seele and to gripe the soveraign reward of endless blis. Behinde are all bodily things, forward or before are all spirituall things. And so St. Paul would forget all bodily things, and even his own body also, that so he might see spiritual things.

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### CHAP. XIII.

*How vertue beginneth in reason and will, and is perfected in love and liking, or affection.*

**T**HUS have I told thee a little of *Contemplation* what it is, to the intent that thou mightest know it, and set it as a marke before the sight of thy soule, and to desire all thy life time to come to any part of it, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the conforming of a soule to God, which cannot be had unlesse it first be reformed by some perfection of vertues turned into affection; which is, when a man loveth vertues because they be good in themselves. Many a man hath the vertues of humility, patience and charity to his Neighbour, and such other, onely in his reason and will, and hath no spirituall delight nor love in them, for oft-times he seeleth grudging, heavinesse, and bitterness for to do them, and yet nevertheless he doth them, but 'tis onely by stirring of reason, for dread of God: This man hath these vertues in reason and will, but not the love of them in affection: But when by the grace of Jesus, and by ghostly and bodily exercise, reason is turned into light  
and

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and will into love, then hath he vertues in affection; for he hath so well gnawn on the bitter barke or shell of the Nut, that at length he hath broken it, & now seeds on the kernell; that is to say, the vertues which were first heavy for to practise, are now turned into a very delight and savour: So that he takes as much pleasure in humility, patience, cleanness, sobriety, and charity, as in any other delights. Verily till these vertues be turned thus into affection, he may well have the second part of *Contemplation*, but the third, in sooth shall he not have.

### CHAP. XIV.

*Of the meanes that bring a soule to Contemplation.*

NOW seeing Vertues dispose us to *Contemplation*, it behoveth us to use the meanes that may bring us to vertues: And they be 3 meanes, which men most commonly use that give themselves to *Contemplation*. As reading of holy Scripture, and good Books. 2ly. Spirituall Meditation. 3dly. Diligent prayer with devotion. By Meditation shalt thou come to see thy wretchedness, thy sins, and thy wickedness; as pride, covetousnesse, gluttony, sloth, and lechery, wicked stirrings of envy, anger, hatred, melancholy, wrath, bitterness, and imprudent heaviness. Thou shalt also see thy heart to be full of vaine shames and feares of the flesh and of the world. All these stirrings will alway boyle out of thy heart, as water runneth out of the spring of a stinking well, and do hinder the sight of thy soule, that thou mayest never see nor feele clearly the love of Jesus Christ; for know thou well, that until the heart be much cleansed from such sins, through firme verity and diligent meditating on Christs humanity, thou canst not have any perfect knowledge of God; himselfe witnessing the same in his Gospel thus; Blessed are the cleane in heart, for they shall see God.

\* Stable  
truth.

Matth. 5.

In

In Meditation likewise shalt thou see those vertues which be needfull for thee to have, as humility, mildnesse, patience, righteousness, spirituall strength, temperance, cleannesse, peace, and sobernesse, Faith, Hope, and Charity. These vertues thou shalt see in Meditation, how good, how faire, how profitable they be; and by prayer thou shalt thereupon desire and get them. Without which third meanes of prayer, thou canst not be contemplative, for Job saith thus; *In abundantia ingredieris sepulchrum, In plenty shalt thou enter thy grave*; that is, in plenty of bodily workes and spirituall vertues shalt thou enter thy Grave, that is thy rest in Contemplation.

## CHAP. XV.

## SECT. I.

*What a man should use and refuse by the vertue of Humility.*

**N**OW if thou desirest to prosecute spiritual workes and exercises wisely, and to labour seriously in them, it beloveth thee to begin right low; three things needest thou first to have, upon which as on firme ground thou shalt set all thy worke, *viz.* Humility, a firm faith, and resolute will and purpose to see after God.

*Humility  
necessary  
for contem-  
plation.*

First, it behoveth thee to have humility on this manner: thou shalt in thy will and in thy feeling judge thy selfe unfitting to dwell among men, and unworthy to serve God in conversation with his servants, and as unprofitable to thy Christian brethren, wanting both skill and power to fulfill any good works of active life in help of thy Neighbour, as other men and women do. And therefore as a wretch, and an out-cast



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and refuse of all men, art shut up in a house alone, that thou shouldest not grieve nor offend man or woman by thy bad example, seeing thou canst not profit them by any wel-doing. Beyond this it becometh thee to look further, that since thou art so unable to serve our Lord by outward bodily works, how much more it becometh thee to deem thy selfe unable and unworthy to serve him spirituallly by inward exercises; for our Lord is a Spirit as the Prophet saith; *Our Lord is a spirit before our face*, and the most kindly service to him is spirituall as he saith himselfe; *True worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth*. Thou then that art so grosse, so lewd, so fleshly, so blinde in spirituall things, and in the understanding of thy owne soule (which it becometh thee first to know, before thou canst come to the knowing of GOD) how shouldst thou feele or thinke thy selfe to be able or worthy to enjoy the estate or likenesse of a contemplative life? which consisteth principally (as I have said) in spirituall knowing. This I speake to thee, not that thou shouldst repent thee of thy cloathing, inclosing, and state of life, but that thou shouldst feele this humility really in thy heart (if thou canst) for this is the very truth and no lye. And thereupon thou shalt night and day desire and endeavour to come in truth as near as thou canst to that state which thou hast taken upon thee, firmly believing it to be the best kinde of state for thee (by the mercy of God) to exercise thy selfe in. And though it be so that thou canst not in this life attaine to the perfection of that state, yet at least seek to make an entry into it, and trust assuredly to have the perfection thereof, by the mercy of God in heaven. And truly this is my owne case, who feele my selfe so wretched, fraile, and fleshly, and so far from the true feeling of that which I speak of, that in a manner I do nothing but cry God mercy, and desire after it (as well as I can) with an hope that our Lord will bring me thereto in heaven; Do thou likewise, and better also, if God give thee grace.

Lam. 4. 20.

John 4.

Boystons.



# The Scale of Perfection.

Not to judge  
others.

The feeling of this lownesse and humility will put out of thy heart all imprudent looking into other mens actions, and drive thee wholly to behold thy self, as if there were no other man living but God and thy selfe. And thou shalt deem and hold thy selfe more vile and more wretched then any one creature that liveth ; insomuch that thou shalt hardly be able to brook and endure thy self, for the greatnesse and number of thy sins, and the filth which thou shalt seeke in thy selfe.

A contem-  
plative  
should judge  
a venial sin  
in himselfe  
more grie-  
vous then a  
mortall sin  
in another.

Thus behoveth it thee sometimes to seele and judge of thy selfe, if thou meane to become truly humble. For I tell thee truly, if thou wilt be very humble, thou must thinke a veniall sin in thy selfe more grievous, and painfull to thee and greater in thy sight sometimes, then great deadly sins in other men : And this is most true in thy case who aimest at *Contemplation*, seeing whatsoever hindreth and letteth thy soule most from the feeling and knowing of God, oughteth to be most grievous and painfull to thee : But a veniall sinne of thy owne letteth thee more from the feeling and perfect love of Jesus Christ, then any other mans sinnes can doe, be they never so great.

It follows therefore, that thou shouldest rise more in thy heart against thy selfe, to hate and condemn in thy selfe all manner of sinne which letteth thee from the sight of God, more then against the faults of other men ; for if thy heart be cleane from thy owne sinnes,

\*Dere thee.

verily the sinnes of other men will not \* hurt thee.

If therefore thou wilt finde rest here, and in Heaven, doe thou ( according to the counsell of one of the holy Fathers ) every day aske of thy selfe, *What am I ?* and judge no man.

Who are not  
to tel others  
of their  
faults.

But thou wilt object, how may this be ? seeing it is a deed of charity to tell men of their faults, and a deed of mercy to admonish them that they may mend.

To this I answer, that in my minde, that to thee

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by other that hath taken on them the state of a contemplative life, it belongeth not to leave the judging over thy selfe to behold and blame other, unlesse there should be great need, so as a man were in danger to perish without

at those men that are Active, and have authority and charge of others, are bound by their office and duty of charity to looke into, enquire, and rightly judge, and correct other mens faults; not out of ire and delight to punish them, but onely for the love of the feare of God, and in his Name, and the love of the salvation of their soules. Other also who are *Active*, and have no care or charge over other men are bound to admonish other men of their faults, out of charity onely, and that when the fault is deadly, and cannot well be corrected by another, and there is hopes of amendment by being admonished, else it is better to let it alone.

That this is good Doctrine, may be gathered by the practices of St. *John*, (who was a contemplative) and of St. *Peter* (who was an *Active* man). For when our Lord at his last Supper with his Disciples, at the request of St. *Peter* to St. *John*, told St. *John* how he should betray him, St. *John* told it not to St. *Peter* (though he asked him) but turned him, and laid his head upon Christs breast, and became rapt through love into the *Contemplation* of the Divinity and divine secrets, and that so pleasingly and officiously to himselfe, that he forgot both *Judas* and *Peter*, teaching thereby other Contemplatives, that in the like occasion they should behave themselves.

By this that hath been said, thou mayest learn neither to judge other men, nor conceive willingly against them any evill suspicions, but love them, and see any faults in them, but worship in thy heart such as lead Active lives in the world, and endure many tribulations & temptations, which thou

*And who are.*

*Not to entertain suspicions of those that lead an active life.*

## The Scale of Perfection.

sitting in thy house ; seelest nought of ; and they endure very much labour and care, and take much pains for their owne and other mens sustenance, and many of them had rather (if they might) serve God ( as thou dost ) in bodily rest and quietnesse ; And nevertheless they in the midst of their worldly businesse, avoyd many sins, which thou, if thou wert in their state, shouldst fall into, and they do many good deeds, which thou canst not do. There is no doubt but many do thus, but which they be, thou knowest not ; and therefore it's good for thee to worship them all, and set them all in thy heart above thy selfe as thy betters, and cast thy selfe downe at their feet, as being the vildest and lowest in thy owne sight : For there is neither dread nor danger in making thy selfe never so low beneath others, though in the sight of God, at the same time, thou hast more grace then others ; but danger there is, in being too high, and lifting up thy selfe in thy thoughts willingly above any other man, though he were the most wretched, and most sinfull Caitiff that is in the earth ; for our Lord saith,

*He that humbleth himselfe shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himselfe shall be brought low.*

Luke 14.

This part of humility doth it behove thee to have in thy beginning, and by it, and farther grace, shalt thou come to the perfection of it, and so of all other vertues. For who so hath one vertue, hath all other vertues ; as much as thou hast of humility, so much hast thou of charity, of patience, and of other vertues, though they be not shown or appear outwardly. Be therefore busie to get Humility, and hold it fast, for it is the first and the last of all other vertues.

The first, as being the foundation, as saith St. Augustine : *If thou thinke to build a high house of vertues, lay first a deepe foundation of humility.* Also it is the last, for it is the maintainer and conserver of all other vertues. St. Gregory saith ; *He that gathereth ( or striveth to keep ) vertues without humility, is like him that maketh or carrieth the powder of spices in the winde.* Do thou



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thou never so good deeds, fast, watch, or any thing else, if thou hast not humility, it is nought which thou dost.

Neverthelesse, if thou feelest not this humility in thy heart with affection, as thou wishest, do as thou mayest, humble thy selfe in will by reasoning and arguing with thy selfe, judging that by right thou shouldst be so humble, and thinke of thy selfe, as I have said, albeit thou do not so feele it within thee, and in that respect hold and esteem thy selfe the verier wretch, that thou canst not feele thy selfe to be that, which in truth thou art: And if thou do so, though thy flesh rise against it, and will not assent to thy will, be not too much daunted, nor troubled, but beare with, and suffer such false feelings of thy flesh, as a paine, and then despise and reprove that feeling, and break down that rising of thy heart, as if thou wouldst be well contented to be spurned and troden under other mens feet. And so by the grace of Jesus Christ, through stedfast thinking on the humility of his precious Man-hood, shalt thou much abate the stirrings of pride; and the vertue of Humility that was first onely in thy naked will, shall be turned into feeling of affection. Without which vertue, either in true will, or in feeling of affection, who so disposeth himselfe to serve God in a Contemplative life, like to a blind man, he will stumble, and never attain thereto. The higher he climbeth by bodily penance and other vertues, and hath not this humility, the lower he falleth. For as St. Gregory saith; *He that cannot perfectly despise himselfe, he hath never yet found the humble wisdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*How to get  
humility.*



## SECT. II.

*How Hypocrites and Hereticks for want  
of Humility exalt themselves in  
their hearts above others.*

**H**ypocrites and Hereticks feels not this Humility, neither in good will, nor in affection, but full cold and dry are their hearts and reines from the soft feeling of this vertue, and by so much the further are they from it, as they esteem they have it. They gnaw on the dry bark without, but the sweet kernell, and the inward taste of it they never come to. They make a shew of outward Humility in habite & holy speech, in a low carriage, and (as they would make show) in many corporal and spiritual vertues: But in the will and affection of their heart, where Humility should be, it is but fayned. For they judge, and despise, and set at nought other men, that will not do as they do, and teach; they esteem them either fooles for want of knowledge, or to be blinded by fleshly living. And therefore lift they themselves up on high in their owne sight above all others; weening that they live better then others, and that they only have the truth and verity of right living and of spiritual feeling, and of the singular grace of God both in knowledg and affection above all others. And out of this sight of themselves riseth a delight in their hearts, in which they worship and praise themselves, as if there were none but they. They praise and thank God with their lips, but in their hearts like thieves they steale his worship and praise, and place it in themselves, and so have neither humility in will nor affection.

A wretched Caitiffe or sinner which falleth all day, and is sorry that he doth so, though he hath not humility in affection, yet hath he it in good will: but an heretick or an Hypocrite hath neither; for they have the condition

## The Scale of Perfection.

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condition of the *Pharisee*, who came, as our Lord saith in the Gospel, with the *Publican* into the Temple, to pray. And when he came, he prayed not, nor asked ought of God, for he thought he had no need; but he began to thank God, and said thus: *Lord I thank thee, that thou givest me more grace then others, that I am not like other men, robbers, luxurious, or other such sinners.* And he looked beside him, & saw the *Publican*, whom he knew for a wretch, knocking on his breast, onely crying for mercy, then he thanked God, he was not such a one as he, for Lord, said he, *I fast twite a week, and I pay my tythes duely*; And when he had done, our Lord said, he went home, without grace as he came, and got just nought.

But thou wilt say, wherein did this *Pharisee* amisse, since he thanked God, and spake the truth? I answer, he did amiss, inasmuch as he judged and reproved the *Publican* in his heart, who was justified of God. And he also did amisse, for he thanked God onely with his mouth, but secretly in his heart he willingly delighted in himselfe through pride and glorying in the gifts of God, stealing to himselfe the honour of them, and the praise and love due to God. This is the condition verily of Hereticks and Hypocrites, they will not willingly pray, and if they pray, do not humble themselves, acknowledging their wretchednesse, but fainly thank and love God, and speake of him with their mouth, but their delight is vaine and false, and not in God, and yet they do not thinke so, for they cannot love God. And as the Wise man saith, *Praise is not comely in the mouth of a sinner.* Wherefore it is profitable for mee, and for thee, and for such other wretches, to leave the condition of this *Pharisee*, and feigned loving of God, and follow the *Publican* in lowlinesse, asking of mercy and forgiveness of sins, and grace of spirituall vertues, that we may afterward with a cleane heart, truly thanke him and love him, and yield wholly all honour without faining; for our Lord asketh thus by his Prophet:

upon

Eccles. 15.

Isa. 66.

*Upon whom shall my spirit rest? And he answereth himselfe, and saith; Upon none but upon the humble, poor, and contrite in heart, and him that trembleth at my words. If therefore thou wilt have the spirit of God ruling in thy heart, have humility and dread him.*

## CHAP. XVI.

*Of a firme Faith necessary hereto, and what things we ought to believe thereby.*

Faith.

**T**HE second thing which it behoveth thee to have, is a firme faith in all the Articles of thy Belief, and in the Sacraments of the holy Church, believing them stedfastly with all thy will in thy heart; And if thou feele any stirring in thy heart against any of them, by suggestion of the enemy, to put thee in doubt of them, be thou stedfast, and dread not therefore, but forsake thine owne wit, without disputing or ransacking of them, and set thy faith in generall on the faith of the holy Church, and make no reckoning of the stirrings of thy heart, which seem to be contrary thereto; For those stirrings are not thy faith, but the faith of the holy Church is thy faith, though thou never see it nor feele it. And beare those suggestions patiently as a scourge of our Lord, by which he will cleanse thy heart, and make thy faith stedfast. Also it behoveth thee to embrace and honour in thy heart all the Lawes and Ordinances made by the Prelates and Rulers of the Church, either in declaring of the Faith, or concerning the Sacraments, or in generall concerning all Christian men, meekely and truly assenting to them, though thou understandest not the causes of making such Ordinances; and though thou shouldst think that some of them were \* unreasonable, yet shalt not thou judge them or find fault with them, but reverence and honour them, although they little concerne thy particular. Neither entertain thou any opinion

\*Unskil-  
full.



opinion or fancy, or singular conceit, under colour of more holinesse (as some unwise people do) either out of thy own imagination, or by the teaching of any other man, which thwarteth the least Ordinance or generall teaching of the Church.

Moreover together with such faith thou shalt firmly *Hope.* hope that thou art ordained by our Lord to be saved, as one of his chosen by his mercy, and stirre not from this hope whatsoever thou hearest or seest; or what temptation befalls thee. And though thou think thy selfe so great a wretch, that thou art worthy to sinke into Hell, for that thou dost no good, nor servest God as thou shouldst, yet hold thee in this truth, and in this hope, and aske mercy, and all shall be well with thee. And though all the Devills in hell appeared in bodily shapcs, saying to thee sleeping or waking, that thou shouldst not be saved: Or all men living on earth, or all the Angels in heaven (if possible) should say the same, yet believe them not, nor be stirred much from thy hope of salvation. And this I speak to thee, because some are so weake and simple, that when they have given up themselves wholly to serve God to their power, and feelee any stirrings of this kinde within them, by the suggestion of the enemy, or any of his false prophets (which men call Soothsayers) that they shall not be saved, or that their state or manner of living is not pleasing to God, they be astonished and moved with such words, and so through ignorance fall sometimes into great heavinesse, and as it were into despaire of salvation.

Wherefore it is (as it seemes to me) necessary for every one, (that by the grace of God is in a full and resolute will to forsake sinne, and as clearly as his conscience telleth him, suffereth no deadly sin to rest in him, but he goes soon to confession for it, and humbly betakes himselfe to the Sacraments of the Church) to have a good trust and hope of salvation. Much more then should they trust and hope, who *who may hope for salvation.* give



*Who not.*

give themselves wholly to God, and eschew venial sins, the best they know and can.

But on the other hand, as perilous it is for him, who lyeth wittingly in deadly sin, to have trust of salvation, and in hope of this trust will not forsake his sin, nor humble himselfe truly to God and the holy Church.

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## CHAP. XVII.

*Of a firme and resolute intent and purpose necessary hereto.*

**T**He third thing needfull for thee to have in thy beginning, was an entire and firme intention; that is to say, an entire will, and a desire onely to please God, for this is charity, without which, all is nought which thou doest, and thou shalt set thine intent alway for to search and travell, how thou mayest please him, resting no time willingly from some good exercises, either bodily or ghostly. Neither shalt thou set a time in thy heart, that thus long thou wilt serve him, and then suffer thy heart willingly to fall downe to vaine thoughts and idle exercises, imagining it needful to do so, for preserving of thy health, leaving the keeping of thy heart and good exercises, and seeking rest and comfort for a time outwardly from thy bodily senses, or inwardly from vaine thoughts, as it were for recreation of thy spirit, that thereby it may be more quick and lively for spiritual employments. But I trow thou wilt not finde it so. I say not that thou wilt be able fully and continually to perform this thy intent and purpose, for oft times thy bodily necessities, as eating, drinking, sleeping and speaking, and the frailty of thy flesh, shall let and hinder thee, be thou never so carefull. But my meaning and desire is, that thy will and intent be alwayes wholly to be exercised bodily or spiri-

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spiritually, and to be no time idle, but alway lifting up thy heart by desire to God and to Heaven, whether thou be eating or drinking, or doing any corporall worke, as much as thou canst, intermit it not willingly. For if thou have this intent, it will make thee quick and ready to thy exercises; and if thou fall through frailty or negligence, upon any idle occupation or vaine speech, it will smite thy heart sharply as a pricke, and make thee to account irkesome, and be weary of all such vanities, and turn again speedily to inward thinking of Jesus Christ, or to some good exercise.

As for thy body, it is good to use discretion in eating, drinking, and sleeping, and in all manner of bodily penance, and in long vocall prayer, and in all bodily and sensible feelings, and servours, or earnestnesse of devotions, and teares, and the like, and in discoursing with the imagination in times of aridities, and want of the feeling of Grace. In all these workes it is good to use discretion, for the mean is the best. But in destroying of sin by keeping thy heart, and in the continuall desire of vertues, and the joyes of heaven, and for to have the spirituall knowledge and love of Jesus Christ, hold there no meane, for the greater it is, the better it is; for thou must hate sinne, and all fleshly loves and seares in thy heart without ceasing: and love vertue and purity, and desire them without stinting, if thou canst. I say not that all this is needfull to salvation, but I trow it is speedfull, and much helping. And if thou keep this full intent, thou shalt profit more in one yeare in vertues, then thou shalt without it, in seven.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XVIII.

*A briefe Rehearsall of what hath beene said,  
and of an offering made of them altogether to JESUS.*

**N**OW I have told thee of the end thou shouldst see in thy desire, and draw toward it as nigh as thou canst, as also what is needful for thee to have in thy beginning, *viz.* Humility, firme Faith, and an intire and strong will and purpose, upon which ground thou shalt build thy spirituall House, by Prayer, and Meditation, and other spirituall Vertues.

Furthermore, pray thou, or meditate thou, or any other good deed or exercises which thou dost, be it either good by grace, or defective through thy own frailty, or whatsoever it be that thou seekest, feelest, or hearest, smellest, or tastest, either outwardly by thy bodily senses, or inwardly by thy Imagination, or knowest or perceivest by thy naturall reason, bring it all within the truth, and the rules of holy Church, and cast all into the mortar of Humility, and break it small with the pestle of the feare of God, and throw the powder of all this into the fire of desire, and offer it up to God. And I tell thee for truth, that well pleasing shall this offering be in the sight of our Lord Jesus, and sweet shall the smoak of that fire smell before his face.

The sum is this; Draw all that thou feelest and intendest within the truth of holy Church, and break thy selfe by Humility, and offer up the desire of thy heart onely to thy Lord Jesus, to have him, and nought else but him. And if thou do thus, I hope by the grace of Christ thou shalt never be overcome by thine enemy. This St. Paul teacheth us, when he

*sajth;*

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faith; Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever else ye do, *1 Cor. 10.*  
do all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, forsaking your  
selves, and offering all up to him. And the meanes  
which thou shalt use to this purpose, are Prayer and  
Meditation.

## PART II.

### CHAP. I. SECT. I.

#### Of Prayer, and the severall sorts thereof.

**P**ayer is profitable and speedfull to be used for *What pray-  
er is.*  
the getting of purity of heart by destroying of  
sinne, and bringing in vertues, not that thou  
shouldst thereby make our Lord know what thou de-  
sirest, for he knoweth well enough what thou needest,  
but to dispose thee, and make thee ready and able  
thereby as a cleane vessell to receive the grace which  
our Lord would freely give thee, which grace cannot  
be felt till thou be \* exercised and purified by the fire  
of desire in devout prayer: For though it be so, that  
prayer is not the *cause* for which our Lord giveth grace,  
neverthelesse it is a way or meane by the which grace  
freely given, cometh into a soul. \* *Assayed.*

But now thou wilt desire perhaps to know how  
thou shouldst pray, and upon what thing thou shouldst  
set the point of thy thoughts in prayer, and also what  
prayer was best for thee to use. As to the first I answer:  
That when thou art wakened out of thy sleep, and art  
ready to pray, thou shalt feele thy selfe fleshly and hea-  
vy, tending ever downe-wards to vaine thoughts,  
either of dreames, or phansies, or of unnecessary things  
of *How we  
should pray.*



of the world, or of the flesh : Then behoveth it thee to quicken thy heart by prayer, and stirre it up, as much as thou canst, to some devotion. And in thy prayer, that thou set not thy heart on any bodily thing, but all thy care shall be to draw in thy thoughts from beholding any bodily thing, that thy desire may be as it were naked and bare from all earthly things, ever aspiring upward to Jesus Christ, whom yet thou canst never see bodily, as he is in his God-head, nor frame any image or likenesse of him in thy imagination ; But thou mayest through devout and continuall beholding of the humility of his precious humanity, feele the goodnesse and the grace of his God-head.

When thy desire and minde is gotten up, and as it were set free from all fleshly thoughts and affections, and is muchlist up by spirituall power unto spirituall favour and delight in him, and of his spiritual presence ; hold thou therein much of thy time of prayer, so that thou have no great minde of earthly things, or if they come into thy minde, that they do but trouble or affect thee little. If thou canst pray thus, thou prayest well, for prayer is nothing else but a ( styeing up ) an ascending or getting up of the desire of the heart into God, by withdrawing of it from all earthly thoughts : And therefore it is likened to a fire, which of it's owne nature leaveth the lownesse of the earth, and alwayes mounteth up into the ayre, even so, desire in prayer, when it is touched and kindled of the spiritual fire which is God, is ever aspiring up to him that it came from.

*What the  
fire of love  
in prayer is.*

They that speak of this fire of love, know not well what it is, nor can I tell thee what it is ; save this I can tell, that it is neither any bodily thing, nor felt by any sense of the body. A soule may feel it in prayer or in devotion, which soule is in the body, but it feeleth it not by any bodily sense ; for though it is true, that it workes in, and upon the soule, that the body it selfe is turned thereby into a heate, and be as it were chased through the labour and travell of the spirit ;

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spirit, neverthelesse by the fire of love is not bodily, for it is onely in the spiritual desire of the soule. And this is no riddle to any man or woman that have had the experience of devotion : But because some are so simple as to imagine, that because it is called a fire, that therefore it should be hot as bodily fire is, therefore have I set down thus much.

Now as to thy other question, to know what prayer is best to be used, I shall give thee my opinion. Thou shalt understand that there be 3 kinds of vocall prayer.

The first is that which was made immediately by God himself, as the *Pater Noster*. The second, those that are made more generally by the Ordinance of holy Church, as *Mattins, Evensong, and Hours*.

The third sort, such as are made by pious men, addressed to our Lord, and to our Lady, and to his Saints. As to these kind of prayers that are called vocall, I judge, that for thee that art religious, and art bound by custome and thy rule to say thy Breviary, it is most expedient to say it, and that as devoutly as thou canst; for in saying of them, thou saist also the *Pater Noster*, and other prayers likewise. And to stir thee up more to devotion, there be ordained *Psalms & Hymns*, and such other which were made by the holy Ghost, like as the *Pater Noster* was. And therefore thou shalt not say them hastily, nor carelessly, as if thou wert troubled or discontented for being bound to the recital of them; but thou shalt recollect thy thoughts to say them more seriously and more devoutly then any other prayers of voluntary devotion; deeming for truth, that seeing it is the prayer of holy Church, there is no vocall prayer so profitably to be used by thee as it is : And so shalt thou put away all heaviness, and by Gods grace turn thy necessity into good will, and thy obligation into a great freedom, so that it shall be no hindrance to thy other spiritual exercises. And after this thou mayst if thou wilt, use others, as the *Pater Noster*, or any other, and stick to those in which thou feelest most savour and spiritual comfort.

*What prayer is best to be used.*

*Three sorts of vocall prayer, & of the first sort.*

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This kinde of vocall prayer is commonly most profitable for every man in the beginning of his Conversion, as being then but rude, and grosse, and carnall (unlesse he have the more grace) nor cannot thinke of spiritual thoughts in his *Meditations*, for his soul is not yet cleansed from his old sins. And therefore I hope it is most speedful to use this manner of prayer, as to say his *Pater Noster*, and his *Ave*, and to read upon his *Psalter*, and such other; For he that cannot run easily and lightly by spirituall prayer, his feet of knowledge and love being feeble and sicke by reason of sin, hath need of a firme staffe to hold by, which staffe is set formes of vocall prayer, ordained by God and holy Church for the help of mens soules; By which the soule of a fleshly man that is alway falling downward into worldly thoughts, and sensuall affections, shall be lifted up above them, and holden up as by a staff, and fed with the sweet words of those prayers, as a childe with milke, and guided and held up by them that he fall not into errors or fancies, through his vaine imaginations; for that in this manner of prayer is no deceit nor error, to him that will diligently and humbly exercise himselfe therein.

*The danger of those that in the beginnings leave the vocal prayers of the Church, & fall too soon to others.*

And hereby thou mayest learne that those men (if any such there be) who in the beginning of their conversion, or soone after, having felt some spirituall comfort, either in devotion, or knowledge, and are not yet stablished therein, leave such vocall prayer and other outward exercises too soone, and give themselves wholly to Meditation, are not wise; for oft times in that time of rest which they take to themselves for meditation, imagining and thinking on spirituall things after their owne fancies, and following their bodily feeling, having not yet received sufficient grace thereto; by indiscretion over-travel their wits, and break their bodily strength, and so fall into fancies and singular conceits, or into open errors, and hinder that grace which God hath already given them by such vanities. The cause of all this is, secret pride,



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and overweening of themselves; for when they have felt a little grace, and some sensible devotion, they esteeme it so much to surpasse the graces and favours he doth to others, that they fall into vaine-glory: Whereas if they knew but how little it were, in comparison of that which God giveth, or may give, they would be ashamed to speak any thing of it, unlesse it were in a case of great necessity. Of this kinde of vocall prayer speaketh David in the Psalmes thus; *With my voyce have I cryed unto the Lord, with my voyce have I prayed to our Lord.* Behold how the Prophet, for to stirre other men to pray both with mouth and with voyce, saith; *With my voyce I cryed to God, and with my speech I besought our Lord.* Psal. 14.

There is another sort of vocall prayer which is not by any set common forme of prayer; but is, when a man or woman, by the gift of God, feeling the grace of devotion, speaketh to God as it were bodily in his presence, with such words as suite most to his inward stirrings for the time, or as cometh to his minde, answerable to the feelings or motions of his heart, either by way of rehearfall of his sins and wretchednesse, or of the malice and sleights of his enemy, or of the mercies and goodnesse of God. And hereby he cryeth with desire of heart, and speech of mouth to our Lord for succour and for help, as a man that were in perill among his enemies; or in sicknesse, shewing his sores to God as to a Physitian, saying with David, *Deliver me from my enemies, O Lord.* Or else thus; *Heal my soule, for I have sinned against thee,* or other such like words as they come to his minde. The second sort of vocall prayer. Psal. 40.

And at other times there appears to him to be so much goodnesse and grace and mercy in God, that it delighteth him with great affection of heart to love him, and thanke him in such words and Psalmes as do most sute to that occasion; as David saith; *Confess yee to the Lord because he is good, because his mercy endureth for ever.* Psal. 134.

This kinde of prayer pleaseth God much, for it proceedeth



ceedeth wholly from the affection of the heart, and therefore never goeth away unsped or empty without some grace, and this prayer belongeth to the second part of *Contemplation*, as I have said before. Who so hath this gift of God fervently, ought for the time to eschew the presence and company of all men, to be alone that he be not letted; who so hath it, let him hold it as long as he can, for it will not last long in its fervour; For if the grace of it come plenteously, it is wondrous painfull to the spirit, though it be much pleasant also to it; for it is much wasting to the body, who so useth it much; for it maketh the body (if the grace of it come in abundance) for to stirre and move here and there, as if the man were mad, or drunk, and could have no rest. This is a point of the passion of love, the which by great violence and mastery breaketh down and mortifieth all lusts and likings of any earthly thing, and woundeth the soule with the blessed sword of love, that it makes the body sinke, not able to beare it. The touch of love is of so great power, that the most vicious or fleshly man living on earth, if he were once strongly touched with this sharp sword, he would be right sober and grave a great while after, and abhor all the lusts and likings of the flesh and all earthly things, which before he took most delight in.

Of this manner of feeling speaketh the Prophet Jer. 20. 9. *remy thus; And there was made in my heart as a fire boyling, and shut up in my bones, and I fainted, not able to beare it.* Which words may be understood thus: The love and feeling of God was made in my heart, not fire, but as boyling or burning fire; for as material fire burneth and wasteth all bodily things where it cometh, right so doth spiritual fire (as the love of God) burneth and wasteth all fleshly loves and likings in a mans soule. And this fire was shut up in my bones, as the Prophet saith of himself, that is to say: This love filleth the powers of the soule, as the minde, reason, and will, with grace and spirituall

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ritual sweetnesse, as marrow filleth full the bones, and that inwardly, and not outwardly in the senses. Neverthelesse it is so mighty within, that it worketh out into the body, and maketh it quake and tremble. And yet it hath so little to do with the bodily senses, and so unacquainted is the body with it, that it cannot skill of it, and cannot beare it, but faileth and falleth downe as the Prophet saith: And therefore our Lord tempereth it, and with-draweth this fervour, and suffereth the heart to fall into more sobriety and softnesse. He that can pray thus often, he speedeth soon in his travell, and shall get more of vertues in a little time, then another without this, or exercised in any other vway of prayer, shall get in a long time, for all the bodily penance he can do. And vvhoo so hath this, need not afflict his body vvith more penance then this brings along vvith it, vvwhich vvill be enough if it come often.

The third sort of prayer is onely in the heart vvithout speech, vvith great rest and quietnesse both of soul and body. A pure heart it behoveth him to have that shall pray after this manner; for such onely attain to it, who by long travell both of body and soule, or else by such sharp touches or motions of love as I have before mentioned, have arrived to rest of spirit, so that his affections are turned into spiritual savour and relish, that he is able to pray continually in his heart, and love and praise God vvithout great letting of temptations, or of vanities, as is said before in the Chapter of the second sort of *Contemplation*. Of this kinde of prayer St. Paul saith thus; *If I pray vvith the tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my minde is vvithout fruit.* What then? *I vvill pray also in the spirit, I vvill pray also in the minde, I vvill sing in the spirit, I vvill sing also in the minde.* That is to say, If I pray vvith my tongue only, by the consent of my spirit, and vvith pains taking and diligence, it is \* meritorious, but my soul is not fed by it, for it seeleth not the fruit of spiritual sweetnesse by understanding. What then shall I do saith St. Paul? And he answers, I vvill pray vvith the exercise and

*The 3d sort of prayer.*

*I Cor. 14. 14, 15.*

\* *Meedfull.*

desire of the spirit, and I will also pray more inwardly in my spirit without labour, in spirituall favour and sweetnesse of the love and the sight of God, by the which sight and feeling of love my soule is fed. Thus (as I understand him) could St. Paul pray.

Levit 6.

Of this manner of prayer speaketh our Lord in holy Writ in a figure thus: *Fire shall alwayes burne upon the Altar, which the Priest shall nourish, putting wood underneath in the morning every day; that so the fire may not goe out.* That is, the fire of love shall ever be lighted in the soule of a devout and clean man or woman, the which is Gods Altar: And the Priest shall every morning lay to it sticks, and nourish the fire; that is, this man shall by holy Psalmes, clean thoughts, and fervent desire, nourish the fire of love in his heart, that it go not out at any time. This prayer of rest or quiet our Lord giveth to some of his servants, as it were a reward of their travell, and an earnest of that love and sweetnesse which they shall have in the blisse of heaven.

## SECT. II.

*How they should doe that are troubled with vaine thoughts in their prayers.*

**B**Ut thou wilt say, that I speak too high in this matter of prayer, which indeed is no mastery nor difficulty for me to write it, but it were a great piece of mastery for a man to practice it.

Thou sayest that thou canst not pray thus devoutly, nor so perfectly in heart as I speak of; for when thou wouldst have thy minde upward to God in thy prayer, thou feelest so many vaine thoughts, either concerning thy owne businesse, or other mens, with many other lets and hinderances, that thou canst neither feele favour, nor rest, nor devotion in thy prayers, and oft times the more thou strivest to keep thy heart, the



the further it is from thee, and the harder, and sometime continues so from the beginning to the end, that thou thinkest all lost that thou dost.

In answer to that which thou saidst, that I spake too high of prayer; I grant well, that I spake more then I my selfe can, or may do; Nevertheless I spake it for this intent, that thou shouldst know how we ought to pray; and when we cannot do so, that we should acknowledge our weaknesse, with all humility, and Gods mercy. Our Lord himselfe hath commanded us thus; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soule, and with all thy might.* It is impossible for any man living to fulfill this bidding so fully as it is said. And yet our Lord hath bidden us so, to the intent (as St. Bernard saith) that thereby we should know our feeblenesse, and then humbly cry for mercy, and we shall have it. Nevertheless I shall instruct thee in this point what to do, as well as I can.

When thou goest about to pray, first make and frame betwixt thee and God in thy minde a full purpose and intention in the beginning to serve him, then with all the powers of thy soule by thy present prayer, and then begin, and do as well as thou canst. And though thou be never so much letted, contrary to thy former purpose, be not afraid, neither be angry at thy selfe, nor impatient against God, because he giveth thee not the savour and spiritua'l sweetnesse in devotion, as thou thinkest he giveth to others. But see therein thy owne feeblenesse, and beare it patiently, deeming it to be (as it is) feeble, and of no worth in thy owne sight, with humility of spirit; trusting also firmly in the mercy of our Lord, that he will make it good and profitable to thee, more then thou imaginest or seelest; For know thou well, that thou art excused of thy duty, and thou shalt be rewarded for this (as well as for any other good work done in charity) though thy minde and intention be not so fully set upon it, as thou wishest. Therefore do what

D 4

belongs



belongs to thee, and suffer our Lord to give what he will, and teach him not. And do thou think thy selfe wretched and negligent, and as it were in great fault for such things, yet for this fault and all other venials which cannot be eschewed in this wretched life, lift up thy heart to God, acknowledging thy wretchednesse, and cry God mercy, with a good trust of forgiveness, and strive no more therewith, nor stay any longer upon it, as if thou wouldst by main strength not feel such wretchedness, but leave off, and go to some other good exercise either corporall or spirituall, and resolve to do better the next time. And though thou shouldst fall another time into the same defect, yea an hundred times, yea a thousand, yet still do as I have said, and all will be well. Moreover a soule that never findes rest of heart in prayer, but all her life is striving with her thoughts, and is troubled and letted with them; If she keep her in humility and charity in other things, she shall have great reward in heaven, for her good will and endeavours.

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CHAP. II. S E C T. I.

*Of Meditation.*

**T**HOU must understand that in *Meditation* no certain rule can be set for every one to observe, for they are in the free gift of our Lord, according to divers dispositions of chosen soules, and according to the state we are in, and according as we thrive in that state, and in vertues, so God increaseth our Meditations, both in spiritual knowing and loving of him: For who so is always alike, and at a stand in knowing of God and spiritual things, it seemeth that he profiteth and groweth but little in the love of God, which may be proved by the example of the Apostles, who when at Pentecost they were filled with burning love of the holy Ghost, became thereby neither fools nor dolts, but became wonderful wise, both in knowing and speaking of God  
and

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and spirituall things, as much as men could in mortall bodies : For thus saith the Scripture, *They were all filled with the holy Ghost, and began to speak the wonders of God.* All which knowledge they got by ravishing in love, through the working of the holy Ghost within them. Divers sorts of *Meditations* there be which our Lord putteth in a mans heart: Some of them shall I tell thee of, that thou mayest exercise thy self in them. In the beginning of the conversion of such a man as hath been much defiled with worldly or fleshly sinnes; commonly his thoughts are much upon his sins, with great compunction & sorrow of heart, with great weeping, and many tears, humbly and busily asking mercy and forgiveness of God for them ; and if he be deeply touched in conscience for them ( for then our Lord will soon cleanse him from them ) his sins will seem ever to be in his sight, and that so foul and so horrible, that hardly can he be able to brook or endure himselfe for them ; & though he confesse himself never so clearly of them, yet will he finde difficulty, and a fretting and biting in his conscience about them, thinking that he hath not confessed right. And scarce can he take any rest, or be at quiet, insomuch that his body were not able to undergo such vexation and pain, were it not that our Lord of his mercy sometimes comforteth him, by the consideration of his passion, and devotion wrought in him thereto ; or by some other meanes as he seeth good. After this manner worketh he in some mens hearts more or less, as he will, and this is through his great mercy, that not onely will forgive the sin or the trespass, but will both forgive the trespassse and the pain due for it in *Purgatory*, for such a little pain here felt in the remorse and biting of conscience. Also to make a man rightly to receive any special gift or degree of the love of God, it behoveth that he first be scoured and cleansed by such a fire of compunction for all his great sins before done. Of this kind of exercise of compunction, often *David* speaks in the *Psalter*, but especially in the *Psalm*, *Miserere mei Deus.*

Acts 2.

And

*The meditation of Christs humanity is given freely by the Spirit, and how it may be known to be given by him.*

And then sometime after this travell and exercise, and sometime together with it, such a man that hath been so defiled with sins, or else another, who by the grace of God hath been kept in innocency, our Lord bestoweth on him the Meditation of his humanity, as of his birth, or of his passion, and of the compassion of our Lady St. Mary. When this Meditation is made by the help of the holy Ghost, then is it right profitable and gracious, and that thou shalt know by this token: When thou art stirred to a Meditation in God, and thy thoughts are suddenly drawn out from all worldly and fleshly things, and thou thinkest that thou seest in thy soule the Lord Jesus in a bodily likeness as he was on earth, and how he was taken of the Jewes, and bound as a Thiefe, beaten and despised, scourged and judged to death, how lowly he bare the Crosse upon his back, and how cruelly he was nailed thereon: Also of the Crown of Thornes upon his head, and of the sharp Spear that sticked him to the heart; and thou in this spirituall sight feelest thy heart stirred to so great compassion and pittie of thy Lord Jesus, that thou mournest, and weepest, and cryest with all thy might of body and soul, wondring at the goodnesse, the love, the patience, the meeknesse of thy Lord Jesus, that he would for so sinfull a Caitiff as thou art, suffer so much paine: And nevertheless thou feelest so much goodnesse and mercy to be in him, that thy heart riseth up into a love, and a joy, and gladnesse in him, with many sweet tears, having great trust of the forgivenesse of thy sins, and of the salvation of thy soule by the vertue of this precious passion: So that when the meditation of Christs passion, or any point of his humanity is thus wrought in thy heart by such a spirituall sight, with devout affection answerable thereunto, know well, that it is not of thy owne working, nor the feigning or working of any evill spirit but by the grace of the holy Ghost: for it is an opening of the spirituall eye into the humanity of Christ, and may be called the fleshly love of God.



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God, as St. Bernard saith, inasmuch as it is set upon the fleshly nature of Christ, and it is right good, and a great help for the destroying of great sins, and a good way to come to vertues, and so after to Contemplation of the God-head; for a man shall not come to the spiritual light in Contemplation of Christs God-head, unlesse first he be exercised in imagination with bitternesse and compassion, and in stedfast thinking of his humanity. Thus St. Paul did, and therefore first he saith, *I desired to know nothing amongst you but Jesus Christ and him crucified.* As it he had said, my knowing and my faith is onely in the passion of Christ, and therefore he saith thus also: *God forbid I should rejoyce in any thing, save in the Crosse of Christ.* And neverthelesse afterward he saith, *We preach unto you Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.* As who should say, first I preached of the humanity and passion of Christ, now I preach to you of the God-head, that Christ is the power of God, and the endlesse wisdom of God.

Gal. 9. 9.

But this manner of Meditation a man hath not alway when he would, but only when our Lord will give it. Unto some he giveth it all their life-time by fits, when he visiteth them; some men being so tender in their affection, that when they heare men speake, or thinke themselves of his precious passion, their hearts melt into devotion, and are fed and comforted thereby against all manner of temptations of the enemy, and this is a great gift of God. To some men he giveth it plentifully at the first, and afterward withdraweth it for divers causes, either if a man grow proud of it in his owne eyes, or for some other sin by which he disableth himselfe to receive the grace; or else our Lord withdraweth it, and all other devotions sometimes, because he will suffer him to be tryed with temptations of the enemy, and thereby will dispose a man to understand and feele our Lord more spiritually, for so he saith to his Disciples; *It is expedient for you that I goe away from you, (in my body) for except I*

*The meditation of the passion is often withdrawn.*

*And why.*

John 16.

*goe,*



goe, the holy Ghost will not come. As long as he was with them they loved him much, but it was fleshly according to his humanity, and therefore it was necessary that he should with-draw his bodily presence, that the holy Ghost might come to them, and teach them how to love him, and know him more spiritually, as he did at *Pentecost*. Right so, it is expedient for some, that our Lord with-draw a little the bodily and fleshly image from the eye of their soule, that their heart may be set and fixed more busily in spiritual desire and seeking of his divinity.

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S E C T. II.

*Of divers temptations of the Enemy, and the Remedies against them.*

*Temptations from Satan.*

N Everthelesse it behoveth a man to suffer many temptations first; which befall some men often after that their comfort is with-drawn, and that sundry ways, by the malice of the enemy. As thus; when the Devill perceiveth devotion much with-drawn, that the soule is left as it were naked for a time, then sendeth he to some temptations of lust, of gluttony, and these so hot and burning, that they shall thinke they never felt so grievous ones in all their life before, even when they gave themselves most to such sins. In somuch that they think it impossible to stand out long from falling without help. And therefore have they then much sorrow for lack of comfort and devotion which formerly they have had, and much dread also of falling from God by such open sins. And all this the Devil worketh (by Gods permission) to make them repent of their good purposes, and turne back to their former courses of sinning. But who so will abide, and suffer a little paine, and not turn againe to sin for any thing, the hand of our Lord is full near, and will help them right soon, for he hath much care of that man  
that

that is in such a case, though he knoweth it not ; for so saith David in the person of our Lord, *I am with him in trouble, I will deliver him , and he shall glorifie me.* Psal. 90. The Devil tempteth others maliciously to spirituall sins, as to doubt of the Articles of Faith, or of the Sacrament of our Lords blessed body: Also to despair, or blaspheming of God, or any of his Saints, or to a wearisomness of their owne life, or to bitternesse against others, or foolish melancholy and sadness, or too much feare of themselves, of doing hurt to their healths by giving themselves so much to serving of God. Some others, and namely solitary folkes, he frighteth with dreads, and ugly shapes appearing to their eyes, or to their imaginations, causing often thereby great shakings and quakings in their bodies, either sleeping or waking, and so troubleth them, that they can hardly take any rest. And also many other wayes he tempteth more then I can, or may say.

The remedies for such may be these. First, that they put all their trust in our Lord Jesus Christ, and often call to minde his passion, and the pains that he suffered for us, and that they then believe stedfastly, that all sorrows and travell which they suffer in such temptations (which to unskilful men may seem a forsaking by God) are indeed no such leavings or forsakings, but tryals for their good, either for cleansing of their former sins, or for the great encreasing of their reward, and the disposing of them for more grace, if they will but suffer a while, and stand fast, that they turn not again willingly to sin.

Another remedy is, that they fear not, nor esteeme these malicious stirrings for sins, nor lay to heart that despaire or blasphemy, or doubtings of Sacrament or any such other (though never so ugly to hear;) for the feeling of these temptations defile the soul no more then if they heard a hound barke, or felt the biting of a flea. They vex the soul indeed, but do not harm it, if so be a man despise them, and set them at nought, for it is not good to strive with them, as if thou wouldst cast

*The remedies of temptations that come from Satan.*

cast them out by mastery and violence, for the more they strive with them, the more they cleave to them. And therefore they shall do well to divert their thoughts from them as much as they can, and set them upon some bulineffe. And if they will still hang upon them, then it is good for them that they be not angry, nor heavy through feeling of them; but with a good trust in God beare them (like a bodily sicknesse, and scourge of our Lord for the cleansing of their sins as long as he pleaseth) out of love to him, even as he was willing to be scourged and beare his Crosse for the love of them. Moreover, it is good for them to open their mindes to some wise man in the beginning, before these temptations get rooting in their heart, and that they forsake their owne wit and judgement, and follow the counsell of another: But that they shew them not unadvisedly or lightly to any unskilful or worldly man, who never felt such temptations, for such may happily by their unskilfulnesse bring a simple soule into despair.

*The remedy of those temptations that seem to come from God.*  
Isa. 54.

Job 11.

Of these manner of Temptations by which a man seemeth forsaken of God, and is not, the help and comfort is this: The Lord saith by his Prophet, *For a little space have I left thee, but in great mercy will I gather thee, For a moment of indignation have I hid my face a little while from thee, and in mercy everlasting will I have mercy on thee.* As if he had said, I suffered thee to be troubled a little while, and in a point of my wrath I smote thee; that is to say, the penance and the paine that thou sufferest here, is but a point, or little pricke of my wrath, in regard of the pain of Hell, or of Purgatory. And yet in my manifold mercies I shall gather thee; when thou thinkest thy selfe forsaken, then will I of my great mercy gather thee againe to me; for when thou esteemest thy self as it were lost, then shall our Lord help thee, as Job saith; *When thou shalt thinke thy selfe consumed, thou shalt arise as the day-star, and thou shalt have confidence.* That is to say, when thou art brought so low by travell into temptation, that

that thou despairest of helpe or comfort, like a forlorn man, yet stand stiffly in hope, and pray to God, and verily thou shalt suddenly spring up as the Day-starre, in gladnesse of heart, and have a sure trust in God.

Moreover for the comfort of such men, that they may not despair in temptation, the Wise man saith thus of our Lord; *In temptation he walketh with him, and bringeth feare and dread upon him, and torments him with his discipline, till he try him in his cogitations, and may trust his soule: And he will establish him, and make a direct way unto him, and make him glad, and will disclose his secrets to him, and will heape upon him as treasures, knowledge of understanding and justice.* The wise man, because he would have none despair in temptation to comfort them, saith thus; *In temptation our Lord forsaketh not a man, but goeth with him from the beginning to the end;* for he saith first, he chooseth him, and that is, when he draweth a man to him by comfort of devotion, and afterward bringeth upon him sorrow and dread, and tryals, and that is when he withdraweth devotion, and suffereth him to be tempted. And he saith, that he tormenteth him in tribulation, untill he have well tried him in his thoughts, and until a man will put all his trust in him fully, and then he bringeth him out into the right way, and fastneth him to him, and gladdeth him, and sheweth him his secrets, and giveth him his treasure of knowing and understanding of righteousness.

By these words may you see that these Temptations or any other, be they never so ugly, are expedient and profitable to a man that by grace is in full will to forsake sinne, if he will be willing to suffer and abide Gods will, and not turn again to sinne which he hath forsaken, for any sorow, or paine, or dread of such temptations; but ever stand still in travell and in prayer with good hope. Our Lord of his endlesse goodness having pittie and mercy of all his creatures when he seeth time, will put to his hand, and smite down the



\* Sound-  
ings.

the Devil and all his power, and ease him of his travell, and put away all dreads, and sorrows, and darknesse out of his heart, and brings into his soule the light of grace opening the eye thereof to see, that all the travell that he hath had was expedient for him, giving him also fresh spiritual might to withstand all the \* suggestions of the Fiend, and all deadly sins, without great difficulty, and leadeth him into a stability and settlednesse of vertue and good living; In which if he keepe himselfe humble to the end, then will he take him wholly to himselfe. Thus much have I said, that thou mightest not be troubled or letted with any such temptation, or too much afraid; but do as I have said, and better if thou canst, and I hope through the grace of Jesus Christ thou shalt never be overcome by thine enemy.

Take heed  
of idlenesse  
after thou  
hast passed  
these temptations.

But after thou hast escaped these temptations, or else if our Lord hath so kept thee (as he doth many by his mercy) that thou hast not been troubled much with any such, then it is good for thee that thou beware of turning thy rest into idlenesse; for there is many a man that taketh rest upon him too soon, as if he were ripe for rest in *Contemplation*. But if thou wilt do well, begin a new game and a new travel, and that is, by *Meditation*, to enter within into thy owne soule, for to know what it is, and by the knowing thereof to come to the spiritual knowledge of God. For St. *Anst*in saith, by the knowing of my selfe I shall get the knowledge of God. I say not that such exercise is absolutely necessary, and thy bounden duty, unlesse thou feel thy selfe stirred up by grace, and as it were called thereto. For our Lord giveth divers gifts where he pleaseth, not all to one man, nor one to every man, save the gift of Charity, which is common to all.

And therefore if a man have received a gift from God, as devotion in prayer, or in the passion of Christ, or any other, be it never so little, let him not leave it quickly for any other, unlesse he assuredly finde and feele a better, but hold that which he hath, and exercise

cise himselfe therein seriously, ever desiring a better when God will give it. Neverthelesse if that he withdrawn somewhat, and he seeth a better, and seeleth his heart stirred thereto, then seemeth it to be a calling of our Lord to the better, and then is it time that he follow after it, to get it; and fall to practice it as speedily as he may.

## CHAP. III.

*That a man should know the measure of his gift,  
that he may desire and take a better when  
G O D giveth it.*

OUR holy Fathers heretofore taught us, that we should know the measure of our gift, and thereupon to work upon it, and according to it, and not take upon us, out of our owne head or imagination, to have more in our feeling or ability then indeed we have. We may ever desire the best, but we may not ever work the best, or our utmost, because we have not yet received that grace and ability. A hound that runneth after the Hare, onely because he seeth other hounds run, when he is weary, he stayeth and resteth, or turneth home again; but if he run because he seeth, or is in view of the Hare, he will not spare for weariness till he have catcht her. Right so it is in the spiritual course, who so hath grace, be it never so little, and wittingly leaveth it, and the working upon it, and putteth himselfe to the exercise or practice of another kinde, for which he hath not as yet received a gift or grace, but doth it onely because he seeth, readeth, or heareth that some others do so, he may perhaps run a while till he be weary, and then will he turne home again; and if he be not the more wary, may hurt his feet with such fancies before he get home. But he that continueth working upon such grace as he hath, and humbly beggeth by prayer perseverantly for more, and  
E after

- after feeleth his heart stirred to follow after the grace which he desired, he may securely run, if he keep himselfe humble. And therefore desire of God as much as thou wilt, or canst, without measure or moderation at all concerning any thing that belongs to his love, or heavens blisse, for he that can desire most of God, shall seele and receive most; but worke as thou mayst, and cry God mercy for that thou canst not do. Thus
- I Cor. 7. St. Paul seems to meane, when he said; *Every one hath a proper gift of God, one so, and another so.* Also
- Ephes. 4. when he said, *There are varieties of gifts, to one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, &c.* And also when he said; *To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the donation of Christ.* And
- I Cor. 2. further where he said; *That we may know the things that are given us by God.* He saith that every one hath his gift of God; *For to every man that shall be saved is given a grace according to the measure of Christs gift.* And therefore it is speedfull that we know the gifts that are given us by God, that we may worke in them, for by those we shall be saved, as some by bodily works, and by deeds of mercy, some by great bodily penance, some by sorrow and weeping for their finnes all their life time, some by preaching and teaching, some by divers graces and gifts of Devotion shall be saved and come to blisse.

PART III.

CHAP. I.

*Of the knowledge of a mans own soul,  
and the powers thereof necessary  
to Contemplation.*

**T**Here is one worke more very needfull and expedient to travell in, which I esteem also to be the plain high way in our working (as much as may be) to *Contemplation*: And that is for a man to enter into \* *himselfe*, to know his own soul, and the powers thereof. \* *The fairness and the foulness of*

By this inward sight thou shalt come to see the Nobility and Dignity that naturally it had in its first Creation; and thou shalt also see the wretchedness and the mischief which thou art fallen into by sin. And from this sight will arise a desire with great longing in thine heart, to recover again that dignity and noblenesse which thou hast lost. Also thou shalt feel a loathing and detestation of thy selfe, with a great will and desire to destroy and beate down thy selfe, and all things that let thee from that dignity and that joy. This is a spirituall work, hard and sharp in the beginning, for those that will go speedily and seriously about it. For it is an exercise in the soule against the ground of all sins little and great, which ground is nought else but a false mistrusted love of man to himselfe. Out of this love, as St. *Austin* saith, springeth all manner of sin deadly and venial.



\* Homeli-  
nesse.

And verily until this ground be well ranfackt, and deep digged, and as it were dryed up, by casting out of all fleshly and worldly loves and feares, a soule can never spiritually feele the burning love of Jesus Christ, nor have the \* familiarity of his gracious presence, nor have a cleare sight of spiritual things by light in the understanding. This then must be the travel and labour of a man, to draw his heart and minde from the fleshly love and liking of all earthly creatures, from vaine thoughts, and from fleshly imaginations, and from the love and vicious feeling of himselfe, so that the soule shall, or may finde or take no rest in any fleshly thoughts or worldly affections. Then inas- much as the soule cannot as yet finde her spiritual rest and satisfaction in the sight and love of Jesus, there- fore it must needs be, that in this meane while she must finde and feele some paine and wearisomnesse.

Luke 13.

This paine and travel is somewhat streight and narrow, neverthelesse I hope it is the way which Christ teacheth to them that would be his perfect lo- vers, in the Gospel, saying, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and few men finde it.* And how

Mark 16.

strait this way is, he telleth us in another place; *Who so will come after me, let him forsake himselfe, and hate his owne soule; That is to say, forsake all fleshly love and hate his owne carnall life, and vaine liking of all his bodily senses for love of me; and take the Crosse, that is, suffer the paine of this a while, and then fol- low me; that is to say, In Contemplation of my huma- nity, and of my divinity.* This is a strait and narrow way, that no bodily thing can passe through it, for it is a slaying of all sinne, as St. Paul saith; *Mortifie*

Coloss. 3.

*your members that are upon earth, not the members of our body, but of our soule, as uncleannesse, lust, evill concupiscence, avarice, fond love to our selves, and earthly things.* Therefore as thy endeavour hath been heretofore to resist bodily sins and open temptations of the enemy, and that in matters as it were from without:

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without : Right so it behoveth thee now in this spiritual worke within thy selfe , to batter downe and destroy the ground of sinne in thy selfe as much as thou canst. Which that thou mayest be better able to perform, I shall give thee the best counsel I can.

### CHAP. II.

*Of the worthinesse and excellency of the Soule , and how it was lost.*

**T**He soule of a man is a life consisting of three powers, *Memory, Understanding, and Will*, after the image and likenesse of the blessed Trinity ; inasmuch as the *Memory* was made strong and stedfast by the power of the Father , to hold and retain God in perpetual remembrance, without forgetting, distracting, or letting of any creature , and so it hath the likenesse of the Father. The *Understanding* was made bright and clear, without errour or darknesse , as perfectly as a soule in a body unglorified could have , and so it hath the likeness and image of the Son, who is infinite wisdom. And the *Will* and affections was made pure and cleane, burning in love towards God, without sensual love of the flesh , or of any creature by the soveraigne goodnesse of God the holy Ghost , and so it hath the likenesse of the holy Ghost , which is blessed love. Whereby you may see, that mans soule (which may be called a created Trinity ) was in its natural estate replenished in its three powers , with the remembrance, sight , and love of the most blessed uncreated Trinity, which is God.

*How man is the Image of the blessed Trin.*

This was the dignity and worth of mans soule by nature, at his first Creation, which thou hadst in *Adam*, before the first sinne. But when *Adam* sinned, choosing love and delight in himselfe, and in the creatures, he lost all his excellency and dignity, and thou also in him , and fell from that blessed

*How he lost it.*

Trinity, into a foule darke wretched Trinity; that is to say, into forgetting of God, and ignorance of himselfe, and into a beastly love and liking of himselfe, and all this he did wittingly and willingly. For as David saith in the Psalter: *Man being in honour understood it not, and therefore he lost it, and became like a beast.*

*Mans wretchedness by sin.*

See then the wretchednesse of thy soule, for as the memory was something established and fixed upon God, so now it hath forgotten him, and seeketh its rest in the creatures, now in one creature, and then in another, and never can finde full rest, having lost him in whom is full rest. And so it is with the understanding, and the will and affections, both which were pure in spirituall savour and sweetnesse, but now is turned into a foule beastly lust and liking in it selfe, and in the creatures, and in fleshly favours, both in the senses, as in gluttony and lechery; and in the imagination, as in pride, vain-glory, and coveteousnesse, insomuch that thou canst do no good deed, but it is defiled with vainglory, nor canst thou easily make use of any of thy five senses cleanly upon any thing that is pleasant, but thy heart will be taken and \* enflam'd with a vaine lust and liking of it, which putteth out the love of God from thy heart, so that no feeling of love or spirituall savour may come into it.

\* Engleimed.

*How notwithstanding all this, man may be saved by passion of Christ, be he never so wretched.*

Every man that liveth in spirit understandeth well all this. This is the soules wretchedness and our mischief for the first mans sin, besides all other wretchednesse and sins which thou hast wilfully added thereto. And know thou well that hadst thou never committed any sin with thy body either mortal or venial but only this which is called original (for that it is the first sin, and is nothing else but the loosing of our Righteousnesse which we were created in) thou shouldst never have been saved, had not our Lord Jesus Christ by his precious passion delivered thee, and restored thee againe.

And therefore if thou thinke I have herein spoken



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too high, because thou canst neither understand it well, nor practice it according as I have delivered. I will now descend to thee, and fall as low as thou canst desire, both for thy profit, and my owne. Then say thus; though thou be never so much a wretch, and hast committed never so great sins, do but forsake thy selfe, and all thy works done, both good and bad, and cry God mercy, and aske salvation onely by vertue of this precious passion, and that with a good trust, and without doubt thou shalt have it: And as for Original sinne, and all other thou shalt be safe, yea as safe as an Anchorite that is inclosed. And not onely thou, but all Christian soules that trust upon his passion, and humble themselves, acknowledging their wretchednesse, asking mercy and forgiveness, and the fruit of this precious passion onely, and submitting themselves to the Sacraments of holy Church, though it be so that they have been encombred vvith sinne all their life time, and never had feeling of spiritual savour or sweetnesse, or ghostly knowledg of God, yet shall they in this faith, and in their good will, by vertue of this precious passion of our Lord Jesus Christ be safe, and come to the blisse of heaven.

All this thou knowest well, but yet it delights me to recite and speak of it; that thou mayest see the endlessse mercy of our Lord, how low he falleth to thee, and to me, and to all sinful Caitiffs, aske mercy therefore, and have it. Thus saith the Prophet in the person of our Lord, *Every one that calleth upon the name of our Lord shall be saved*; that is to say, asketh salvation by Jesus and Rom. 10. his passion.

This courtesie of our Lord some men understand aright, and are saved thereby: And others in trust of this mercy and this courtesie lye still in their sins, and thinke to have the benefit of it when they list, but they are mistaken, for they are taken ere they be aware, and so damn themselves.

*The endlessse mercy of God to all sinners.*

*who shall be partakers of it, and who not.*



*whether a particular love of Jesus be necessary to salvation, and how.* But thou wilt object ; If this be true that thou sayst, I wonder greatly at that which I finde in some holy mens Books, for some say (as I understand them) that he that cannot love this blessed name Jesus, nor finde and seele in it spiritual joy and delight with sweetness, shall be a stranger to the blis of heaven, and never come there. Verily when I read these words, they astonisht me, making me afraid : For I hope (as you have said) that through the mercy of our Lord, they shall be safe, by keeping of the Commandements, and by true repentance for their former evil life, who never felt any such spiritual sweetness, nor inward savour in the name of Jesus, and therefore I marvail the more; to finde them say (as me thinketh) the contrary hereto.

1 John 1.

To this I answ. that (in my opinion) their saying (if it be well understood) is true, and no whit contrary to what I have said, for this name *Jesus* is nothing else in English but healer, or health. Now every man that liveth in this wretched life is spiritually sick, for there is no man that liveth without sin, wch is a spiritual sickness, as St. *John* saith of himselfe, and of other perfect men thus ; *If we say we have no sin, we beguile our selves, and there is no truth in us.* And therefore he can never come to the joy of heaven, till he be first healed of this ghostly sickness. But this spiritual healing may no man have (that hath the use of reason) except he desire it & love it, and have delight therein, inasmuch as he hopeth to get it. Now the name of Jesus is nothing else but this spiritual health ; wherefore it is true that they say, that no man can be safe, unless he love and like in the name of Jesus ; for no man can be spiritually healed, until he love and desire spiritual health ; just as if a man were bodily sicke, there could no earthly thing be so dear, nor so needful to him, nor so much would he desire it, as bodily health ; for though thou shouldst give him all the riches and dignities of this world, and not make him whole (if thou couldst) thou pleasest him not. Right so it is to a man that is sick spiritually, and feeleth the pain thereof ; nothing is so dear, nor so needful, nor so much coveted by him, as is ghostly health, and

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and that is *Jesus*, without whom all the joys of heaven cannot please him. And this is the reason (as I take it) why our Lord when he tooke mans nature upon him for our salvation, would not be called by a name betokening his infinite essence, or his wisdom, or his justice, but only by that which betokened the cause of his coming, *viz.* the salvation of mans soul, which salvation this name *Jesus* betokened. Hereby then it appeareth that none can be saved unlesse he love salvation, to have it through the mercy of our Lord *Jesus* only, by the merits of his passion; which love he may have that liveth & dieth in the very lowest degree of charity.

Also I may affirm on the other side, that he that cannot love this blessed name *Jesus* with a spiritual joy, nor encrease in it with heavenly melody here, shall never have, nor feel in heaven the fulness of sovereign joy, which he that could so love it in this life by abundance of perfect charity in *Jesus*, shall then have, and feel in heaven, and so may their saying be understood.

Nevertheless he shall be saved, and have great reward in heaven from God, whosoever in this life is in the lowest degree of charity, by keeping Gods Commandements. For our Lord saith, *in my Fathers house* Joh. 14.2. *are sundry mansions*. Some are perfect souls, who in this life are filled with charity and graces of the holy spirit, and sing most sweetly & lovingly to God in *Contemplation* of him, with wonderful sweetness and heavenly favor. These because they have most charity and grace of the H. G. shall have the highest reward in the blisse of heaven, for these are called *Gods darlings*. Others there be, not disposed or enabled to *Contemplation*, nor having the perfection of charity (as the Apostles and Martyrs had in the beginning of the *holy Church*) these shall have a lower reward in the blis of heaven, for these are called *Gods friends*; for thus doth our Lord call them: *Eat & my friends, & be inebriated O my darlings*. As if he had said; Ye that are my friends, because ye have kept my *Commandments*, & preferred my love before the love of the world, & loved me more then any earthly thing, ye shall be fed with the spiriual food of the bread of life.

Cantic. 5

But

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But ye that are more then my friends , that not onely kept my Commandements, but also of your owne free will fulfilled my counsels, and loved me entirely with all the powers of your soules , and burned in my love with spiritual delight ( as especially did the Apostles and Martyrs , and all other soules that through grace came to the gift of perfection ) ye shall be made drunken with the noblest and freshest Wine in my Cellar, which is the supream joy of love in heaven.

### CHAP. III.

#### S E C T. I.

*That a man should be industrious to recover again his ancient dignity, and reforme within him the image of the Trinity, and how it may be done.*

*This mercy not to be abused, or presumed upon.*

**N**Everthelesse though this that I have said be true, through the endlesse mercy of God to thee and to me, and to all mankind; we are not therefore in confidence hereof to be more carelesse, or wilfully negligent in our living; but the more busie to please him, and the rather, because now we are restored againe in hope by the passion of our Lord, to the dignity and blisse which we had lost by *Adams* sin. And though we should prove not to be able to recover it fully here in this life, yet should we desire and endeavour for to recover the image and likenesse of the dignity we had, so that our soul might be reformed as it were in a shadow, by grace to the image of the Trinity which we had by nature, and hereafter shall have fully in blisse. For that is the life which is truly contemplative to begin here, in that feeling of love and spiritual knowing of God, by opening of the spiritual eye, which shall never be lost nor taken away, but shall be perfected in a far higher manner



manner in heaven. Thus did our Lord promise to St. Mary Magdalen (that was a true *Contemplative*) when he told her *that she had chosen the better part* (which was the Luke 10. love of God in *Contemplation*) *that should never be taken from her.*

I do not say that in this life thou canst recover so whole and so perfect a cleanness and innocency, knowing and loving of God, as thou hadst at first; and shalt have hereafter, neither mayest escape all the wretchednesse and pains of sinne: Nor that thou living in mortall flesh canst wholly destroy and kill within thee all false vaine loves, nor eschew all venial sinnes, but that they will (unless they be stopped by great fervour of charity) spring out of thy heart, as water doth out of a thinking Well. But I wish that if thou canst not fully quench it, yet thou mayest somewhat slack it, and come as neare as thou canst to cleanness of soule. For our Lord promised to the Children of *Israel*, when he led them into the Land of Promise, and in them by a figure to all Christians, saying; *All the land which thy foote shall tread upon, shall be thine.* That is to say, so much Land as thou canst tread upon with thy foot of true desire, so much shalt thou have in the Land of Promise, viz. in the blisse of Heaven, when thou comest thither.

*This image is not restored perfectly in this life.*

Deut. 11.

## SECT. II.

*That this dignity and image is restored by JESUS, and how he is to be desired, sought and found.*

SEEKE then that which thou hast lost, that thou mayest finde it; for well I wote, whosoever once hath an inward fight, but a little of that dignity and that spirituall fairnesse which a soule hath by creation, and shall have again by grace, he will loath in his heart all the blisse, the liking, and the fairnesse of this world,

*How Jesus is to be sought.*



world, as the stink of Carrion : And he will never have any will or minde to do other deed, night or day (save what meere need of nature requireth) but desire, mourne, seeke, and pray how he may come againe thereto.

*By desiring  
him.*

Neverthelesse inasmuch as thou hast not as yet seen what it is fully, for thy spiritual eye is not yet opened, I shall tell thee one word for all, in the which thou shalt seeke, desire, and finde it; for in that one word is all that thou hast lost. This word is Jesus, I meane not this word Jesus painted upon the wall, or written in letters on the Book, or formed by lips in sound of the mouth, or framed in thy mind by imagination, for in this wise may a man that is void of charity find him: But I meane Jesus Christ, that blessed person, God and Man, Son of the Virgin *Mary*, whom this name betokeneth; that is, all goodnesse, endlesse wisdom, love and sweetnesse, thy joy, thy glory, and thy everlasting blisse, thy God, thy Lord, and thy salvation.

If then thou seelest a great desire in thy heart to Jesus, either by calling to mind this name Jesus, or by minding, or thinking, or saying of any other word; or in Prayer or Meditation, or any other deed which thou dost; which desire is so much, that it putteth out as it were by force, all other thoughts and desires of the world, and of the flesh, that they rest not in thy heart. Then seekest thou well thy Lord Jesus. And when thou seelest this desire to God, or to Jesus (for it is all one) holpen and comforted by a ghostly might, inso-much that it is turned into love, affection, and spiritual savour and sweetnesse, into light and knowing of truth, so that for the time, the point of thy thought is set upon no other created thing, nor seeleth any stirring of vain-glory, nor of selfe-love, nor any other evill affection (for they cannot appeare at that time) but this thy desire is onely enclosed, rested, softned, suppled, and annoynted in Jesus, then hast thou found some-what of Jesus; I mean not him

as he is, but a shadow of him; for the better that thou findest him, the more shalt thou desire him. Then observe by what manner of Prayer, or Meditation, or exercise of Devotion thou findest greatest and purest desire stirred up in thee to him, and most feeling of him, by that kinde of prayer, exercise, or worke seekest thou him best, and shalt best finde him. Therefore if it come into thy minde, asking as it were of thy selfe, *What hast thou lost? and what seekest thou?* Lift up thy mind & the desire of thy heart to Jesus Christ, though thou be blind, and canst see nought of his God-head, and say; *That him hast thou lost, & him wouldst thou have, and nothing but him, to be with him where he is; No other joy, no other blifs in heaven or in earth, but him.*

And though it be so, that thou feel him in devotion or in knowing, or by any other gift or grace rest not there, as though thou hadst fully found Jesus; but forget that which thou hast found, and alway be desiring after Jesus more & more, to find him better, as though thou hadst right nought found in him; For wote thou well, that what thou feelest of him, be it never so much; Yea, though thou wert ravished with St. Paul into the third heaven, yet hast thou not found Jesus as he is in his joy: Know thou, or feel thou never so much of him, he is still above it. And therefore if thou wilt fully find him as he is in his joy, do thou never cease from spiritual desiring and loving of him, whilst thou livest.

Verily I had rather feel and have a true and cleane desire in my heart to my Lord Jesus Christ, though I see little of him with my spiritual eye, then to have without this desire, all the bodily penance of all men living, all Visions, all Revelations of Angels appearing, all songs and sounding to the eare, all tastes and smellings, fervours, or any delights, or bodily feelings, and (to be brieft) all the joyes of heaven and earth which are possible to be had, without this desire to my Lord Jesus. David the Prophet felt (as I conceive) this desire in himselfe, when he said thus:

*What profit  
it is to have  
the desire  
of Jesus.*

*What*

Psal. 62.

*What have I in heaven but thee? and what can I desire on earth besides thee? As if he had said, Lord Jesus, what heavenly joy is liking to me without desire of thee, whilst I am on earth? or without love of thee when I come to heaven? As who should say, right none. If then thou wilt feel any thing of him bodily or spiritually, covet nothing but only to feel in truth within thee a desire of his grace and of his merciful presence, so that thou mayest thinke, that it is not possible for thy heart to finde any rest in any thing but in him.*

Psal. 119.

*Thus coveted David, when he said thus; My soule hath coveted, or longed after the desire of thy righteousness at all times. Seeke then as David did, Desire by desire. And if thou seelest by thy desire in Prayers and in Meditations, the familiar presence of Jesus Christ in thy soule, binde thy heart fast thereto, that it fall not from it; and if thou shouldst stumble, that thou mayest soon finde him again.*

*Jesus desires to be sought and found.*  
Matth. 7.

Seeke then Jesus whom thou hast lost, for he would be sought, and is desirous to be found, for he himselfe saith; *Every one that seeketh findeth.* The seeking is painfull, but

Prov. 20.

the finding is joyfull, doe therefore after the counsel of the Wise man, if thou wilt finde him: *If thou shalt seeke wisdom (that is Jesu) like silver, and as treasures shalt dig her up, then shalt thou understand the feare of our Lord, and shalt finde the knowledge of God.* It becometh thee to delve deep in thy heart, for therein Jesus is hid, and cast out perfectly all loves and likings, sorrows and feares of all earthly things, and so shalt thou find wisdom, that is Jesus.

Luke 15.

Be thou then like the woman in the Gospel, of whom our Lord saith; *What woman is, that hath lost her groat and doth not light a candle, and turne her house upside downe, and seeke till she finde it? As who should say, there is none but would do so. And when she hath found it, she calleth to her friends, and saith to them thus: Make mirth with me and melody, for I have found the groat which I had lost.*

This



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This groat is Jesus which thou hast lost, *Two Lanthorns to*  
and if thou wilt finde him, light up a Lant- *finde Jesus by.*  
horne, that is Gods Word, as *David* saith;  
*Thy Word is a Lanthorne to my feet.* By this Lanthorn *Psal. 119.*  
shalt thou see where he is, and how to finde him. And *1. His word.*  
if thou wilt, thou mayest together with this, light up  
another Lanthorn, that is, the Reason of thy soule. *2. Reason.*  
For as our Lord saith; *The lanthorn ( or light ) of thy*  
*body is thy bodily eye.* Right so may it be said, that *Luke 10.*  
the Lanthorn of thy soule is Reason, by the which  
thy soule may see all spirituall things. By this Lant-  
horn mayest thou finde Jesus, and that is if thou hold  
up this Lanthorn from underneath the bushel, as our  
Lord saith; *No man lighteth ( a candle or ) Lanthorn to*  
*set it under a bushell, but upon a Candlesticke.* That is to  
say, thy Reason must not be overlayd with earthly bu-  
sinesse, or vaine thoughts, and earthly affections,  
but alwayes upwards, above all vaine thoughts and  
earthly things as much as thou canst. And if thou do  
so, thou shalt see all \* the dust, all the filth and small \* *The*  
motes in thy house, ( for he is light it selfe ) that is *Molle.*  
to say, all fleshly loves and fears in thy soule, I mean  
not perfectly *All*: For as *David* saith, *Who knoweth all Psal. 19.*  
*his trespasses?* As who should say, no man. And thou  
shalt cast out of thy heart all such sins, and sweep thy  
soule cleane with the besome of the feare of God, and  
wash it with thy teares, and so shalt thou finde thy  
Groat, Jesus; He is thy groat, thy penny, thy  
heritage.

This groat will not be found so easily as *He must be sought*  
tis thought, for this worke is not of one *with some paines.*  
houre, nor of one day, but many dayes and  
yeares, with much sweat and \* labour of body, and \* *Swynke.*  
travel of soule. And if thou cease not, but seeke  
busily, sigh and sorrow deeply, mourne stilly, and  
stoop low, till thine eyes water for anguish and for  
paine, for that thou hast lost thy treasure Jesus, at  
the last ( when his will is ) well shalt thou finde thy  
groat Jesus. And when thou hast found him, as I  
have



have said, that is, when in purity of conscience seekest the familiar and peaceful presence of that blessed man Jesus Christ, at least a shadow or glimmering of him; thou mayest, if thou wilt, call all thy friends to thee, to make mirth with thee, and melody, for that thou hast found thy groat Jesus.

*In what place Jesus is lost & found, and Gods mercy manifested herein.*

See then the mercy and courtesie of Jesus. Thou hast lost him, but where? soothly in thy house, that is to say, in thy soule, that if thou hadst lost all thy reason of thy soule, by its first sinne, thou shouldst never have found him againe; but he left thee thy reason, and so he is still in thy soule, and never is quite lost out of it.

*Isa. 15.*

*Matth. 13.*

Nevertheless thou art never the nearer him, till thou hast found him, He is in thee, though he be lost from thee; but thou art not in him, till thou hast found him. This is his mercy also, that he would suffer himselfe to be lost onely there where he may be found, so that thou needest not run to Rome, nor to Jerusalem to seeke him there, but turne thy thoughts into thy owne soule, where he is hid, as the Prophet saith; *Truly thou art the hidden God*, hid in thy soule, and seek him there. Thus saith he himselfe in the Gospel; *The kingdome of heaven is likened to a treasure hid in the field, the which when a man findeth, for joy thereof, he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.* Jesus is a treasure hid in the soule. Then if thou couldst finde him in thy soule, and thy soule in him, I am sure, for joy thereof thou wouldst part with the liking of all earthly things to have him. Jesus sleepeth in thy heart spiritually, as he did sometime bodily when he was in the Ship with his Disciples, but they, for feare of perishing, wakened him, and soone after he saved them from a tempest. Do thou so, stirre him up by prayer, and waken him with great crying of desire, and he will soon rise and helpe thee.

Never

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Nevertheless I believe thou sleepest oftner to him, then he doth to thee; for he calleth thee full oft with his sweet secret voyce, and stirreth thy heart full stillly, that thou shouldst leave all other jangling of other vanities in thy soule, and hearken onely to him. Thus saith David in the person of our Lord; *Hear O daughter and consider, incline thine eare, and forget thy owne people and thy fathers house*; That is, forget the people of thy worldly thoughts, and the house of thy fleshly and naturall affections. Here thou seest how our Lord calleth thee, and all others that will hearken to him, and what hindreth thee that thou canst neither see nor heare him? Soothly there is so much din and noyse in thy heart of vaine thoughts and fleshly desires, that thou canst neither heare him nor see him. Therefore put away those unquiet noyses, and destroy the love of sin and vanity, and bring into thy heart, the love of vertues and full charity, and then shalt thou hear thy Lord speak to thee.

*We our selves are the lets and hindrances of finding him.*

As long as Jesus findeth not his Image reformed in thee, he is strange, and the farther from thee: therefore frame and shape thy self to be arrayed in his likenesse, that is in humility and charity, which are his liveries, and then will he know thee, and familiarly come to thee, and acquaint thee with his secrets. Thus saith he to his Disciples; *who so loveth me, he shall be loved of my Father, and I will manifest my selfe unto him*. There is not any vertue nor any good work that can make thee like to our Lord, without Humility and Charity, for these two above all other are \* most acceptable to him, which appeareth plainly in the Gospel, where our Lord speaketh of humility thus; *Learn of me, for I am meeke and humble in heart*. He saith not, learn of me to goe barefoot, or to goe into the desert, and there to fast 40 dayes, nor yet to choose to your selves Disciples (as I did) but learne of me meeknesse, for I am meek & lowly in heart. Also of charity he saith thus;

*Humility and Charity are the speciall liveries of Jesus.*

John 14.

\* Most leys.

Matth. 11.

John 13. *This is my Commandement, that yee love one another, as I loved you, for by that shall men know you for my Disciples. Not that you worke miracles, or cast out Devils, or preach, or teach, but that each one of you love one another in charity. If therefore thou wilt be like him, have humility and charity. Now thou knowest what charity is, viz. To love thy neighbour as thy selfe.*

## CHAP. IV.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the ground and image of sinne in us, which is first to be found out and laboured against, and how it is to be done.*

**T**Hou hast heard already what thy soul is, and what dignity and beauty it had, and how it lost it, and also how it may by grace and busie travell be somewhat recovered again, in feeling, in part in this life. Now I shall tell thee (according to my feeble ability) how thou mayest enter into thy selfe to see the ground of sin, and destroy it as much as thou canst, and so recover a part of thy soules dignity.

*How we should behold this Image.*

To do this, thou shalt cease for a time from all bodily works, and from all outward businesse as well as thou canst, then shalt thou draw thy whole thought into thy selfe from all thy bodily senses, which thou must hold in, and restrain from wandering forth, so that thou take no heed of any thing thou seest or hearst, or feelest, and after this draw in thy thoughts nearer from all imaginations of any bodily deeds done before by thee, or of other mens deeds; and this is not difficult to be done at that time when thou hast devotion, but thou must do it also when thou hast

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no such devotion, and then it will be somewhat difficult. And set thy intent and full purpose, as if thou wouldst not seek nor finde any thing but onely the grace and spiritual presence of Jesus.

This will be painfull; for vaine thoughts will presse into thy heart very thick, to draw thy minde down to them. And in doing thus, thou shalt finde somewhat, but not Jesus whom thou seekest, but onely a naked remembrance of his name. But what then shalt thou finde? Surely this; A darke and ill-favoured image of thy owne soule, which hath neither light of knowledge nor feeling of love of God. This image if thou behold it heedfully, is all inwrapped and cloathed with black stinking rags of sin, as pride, envy, anger, coveteousnesse, gluttony, sloath, and luxury. This is not the image of Jesus, but the image of sin, which St. Paul calleth *a body of sinne and of death*. This Image and this black shadow thou bearest about with thee wheresoever thou goest; out of this spring many great streames of sinne, and small ones also. Just as out of the image of Jesus if it be reformed in the beames of spirituall light, will spring and ascend up toward heaven burning desires, pure affections, wise thoughts, and all comelinesse of vertues: Even so out of this image spring stirrings of pride, of envy, and such other, which cast thee down from the comeliness of a man, into a beasts likeness.

Rom. 6.

Peradventure now thou beginnest to thinke with thy selfe what this image is like, and that thou shouldst not study much upon it, I will tell thee. It is like no bodily thing; What is it then saist thou? Verily it is *nought*, or no reall thing, as thou shalt finde, if thou try by doing as I have spoken; that is, draw in thy thoughts into thy selfe from all bodily things, and then shalt thou finde right *nought* wherein thy soule may rest.

This *nothing* is nought else but darknesse of conscience, and a lacking of the love of God and of light; as sinne is nought but a want of good, if it were so



that the ground of sin was much abated and dried up in thee, and thy soule was reformed right to the Image of Jesus; then if thou didst draw into thy selfe thy heart, thou shouldst not finde this *Nought*, but thou shouldst find Jesus; not only the naked remembrance of this name, but Jesus Christ in thy soule readily teaching thee, thou shouldst there finde light of understanding, and no darknesse of ignorance, a love and liking of him, and no paine of bitterness, heavinesse, or tediousnesse of him. But because thou art not reformed, therefore when thy soule draweth into her selfe from all bodily things and delights, thou findest nothing but emptinesse, darknesse, and heavinesse: so that thou thinkest it an hundred yeares till thou be out againe to some bodily delight or vaine thoughts, and it is no wonder; for he that cometh home to his house, and findeth nothing there but stink and smoak, and a chiding Wife, he will quickly run out of it: Even so thy soule, finding no comfort in it selfe, but black smoak of spiritual blindnesse, or great chiding of guilty or fleshly thoughts, crying upon thee that thou canst not be in peace, verily it will quickly be weary of being alone and recollected, until it be out againe. And this is the darknesse of conscience.

*He that wil  
find Jesus  
must take  
pains about  
this dark i-  
mage of sin.*

Nevertheless in this dark conscience it behoves him to labour and sweat, that is to say, it behoveth thee to draw thy thoughts into thy selfe from all bodily things as much as thou canst, and then when thou findest right nought but sorrow & pain, and blindness in this darknesse, if thou wilt find Jesus, thou must suffer the pain of this dark conscience, and abide a while therein. And here also thou must beware that thou take Jesus Christ into thy thoughts against this darknesse in thy mind, by busie prayer and fervent desire to God, not setting the point of thy thoughts on that foresaid *Nought*, but on Jesus Christ whom thou desirest. Think stily on his passion, and on his Humility, and through his might thou shalt arise. Do as if thou wouldst  
beate

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beat downe this darke image, and go through-stitch with it. Thou shalt \* hate and loath this darknesse, \* *Agryse.* and this *Nought*, juſt as the Devill, and thou ſhalt deſpiſe and all to \* break it. \* *Breſt it.*

For within this *Nought* is Jeſus hid in his joy, whom thou ſhalt not finde with all thy ſeeking, unleſſe thou paſſe this darknesſe of conſcience.

This is the ghottly travel I ſpake of, and the cauſe of all this writing is to ſtir thee thereto, if thou have grace. This darknesſe of Conſcience, and this *Nought* is the image of the firſt *Adam*: St Paul knew it well, for he ſaid thus of it; *As we have before borne the image* 1 Cor. 15. *of the earthly man, that is the firſt Adam, right ſo that we might now beare the image of the heavenly man, which is Jeſus, the ſecond Adam.* St. Paul bare this image oſt full heavily, for it was ſo cumbersome to him, that he cryed out of it, ſaying thus; *O who ſhall deliver me* Rom. 7. *from this body and this image of death.* And then he comforted himſelfe and others alſo thus; *The grace of God through Jeſus Chriſt*

### S E C T. II.

*What the ſaid image of ſinne is properly, and what cometh out of it.*

I Have already told thee of this Image, that it is *Nought*. Nevertheleſſe if thou canſt not underſtand how it ſhould be an image, ſeeing *Nought* can be nothing elſe but nought, and ſo for all my telling thou canſt make nothing of it. I ſhall therefore tell thee more plainly of this image as me thinketh.

This Image is a false inordinate love of thy ſelf. Out of this come all manner of ſins *7 Rivers ſpring- ing out of this I-* by ſeven Rivers, which are theſe, Pride, *mage.*

Envy, Anger, Sloth, Coveteuſneſſe, Gluttony, and Lechery. Lo this is ſome-what that thou may ſt underſtand. By ſome one of theſe Rivers

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runneth out all manner of sin, and putteth thee out of the state of charity, if it be a deadly sin; or letteth the fervour of Charity if it be veniall. Now mayest thou grope at least that this Image is not altogether *Nought*; but it is much of bad, for it is a great spring of love unto thy selfe, with such Rivers as I have said.

But now sayest thou how can this be true? for I have forsaken the world, and am shut up in a Monastery; I meddle with no man, I chide not, I strive not, I neither buy nor sell, I have no worldly businesse, but by the mercy of God keep my selfe chaste, and with-hold me from delights. And besides this, I pray, I watch, I labour bodily and ghostly, as well as I can, how should this Image then be so much in me as thou speakest of?

*The spring of all  
these Rivers is  
within.*

To this I answer, granting thee, that I hope thou dost all these workes, and more; and yet may it be true as I say. Thou art busie to thy power to stop these Rivers without, but the spring within perhaps thou leavest whole. Thou art like to a man which had in his Yard a stinking Well, with many runnings from it, who went and stopped the runnings, & left the spring whole, and thought all was well; but the water sprang up at the ground of the Well, and stood still, inso-much that it corrupted all the fairnesse of his garden, & yet did no water run out. Right so may it be with thee, if it be so that thou hast by grace stopped the rivers of this image without, so farre that all is done well, but beware of the spring within, surely unlesse thou stop and cleanse that as much as thou canst, it will corrupt all the flowers of the garden of thy soule, shew they never so faire outwardly in sight of men.

*How a man may  
know whether the  
spring be stopped.*

But now, sayst thou, whereby shall I know that the ground is stopped (if I go about it?) As to this I shall tell thee, how by trying and experience thou shalt know this Image  
if

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if it be in thee, and how much it is in thee, and thereby shalt thou know how much it is stopped in thee, and how little also. And inasmuch as pride is the principal River, I shall begin with it.

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## CHAP. V.

### SECT. I.

*Of the seven deadly sinnes, and first of Pride,  
what it is, and when it is a deadly sinne,  
and when but veniall.*

**P**Ride is nothing else (as the Learned say) but love of thy own excellency, that is of thy own worship; The more thou lovest and likest thine owne honour, the more thou hast of this pride, the more thou hast of this Image in thee; It thou feel in thy heart a stirring of pride, that thou art holier, wiser, better, and more vertuous then others, that God hath given thee grace to serve him better then others do, and thinkest all others beneath thee, and thy selfe above them, or any other thought of thy selfe, which sheweth to the eye of thy soule an excellency and a surpassing of others, and thou feelest a love and delight in this stirring, and a vaine pleasing in thy selfe, that indeed thou art so; this is a token that thou bearest this blacke image, which though it be privy from the eyes of men, yet it appeareth openly in Gods sight.

But thou sayest, that thou canst not eschew such stirrings of pride, for oft thou feelest them against thy will, and therefore thou holdest them no sin; or if they be sin, they be nought but venial.

As to this I answer, that the feeling of these stirrings of pride, or of any other sin, which spring either out of the corruption of this soule Image, or



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by in-casting or suggestion of the enemy is no sin, so far as to the feeling of them. Neverthelesse when by negligence and thy owne blindness, this feeling is received unwarily in thy thoughts, and turned into love and liking, then is there sin in it, more or lesse according to the measure of this love, sometime veniall, and sometime deadly.

*The priviledge that Christians have in relation to Concupiscence, and the stirrings of sin.*

This is a grace and priviledge by vertue of Christs passion granted to all Christians baptized in Water and the holy Ghost; For verily to Jewes and Saracens, who beleeve not in Iesus Christ, all such stirrings are deadly sins: For St. Paul saith, *Whatsoever is done without faith in Christ, is sinne.* But we Christians have this priviledge through his mercy, that such feelings are no sins, but the paine of Original sin.

*When the stirrings of pride are mortal.*

But when it is veniall and when it is deadly I cannot fully tell thee, Neverthelesse a little I shall say, as me-thinketh. When the stirrings of pride are received and turned into liking, so far that the heart chooseth them for a full rest and a full delight, and seeketh no other end, but onely the liking therein, then is this pride deadly sin; for he maketh and chooseth this delight as his God, without any opposing of his reason or will, and therefore it is deadly sin.

Rom. 8.

But now saist thou, who is such a fool as to choose pride for his God? no man living sure will do so. To this I answer, that I cannot tell thee in speciall, who sinneth deadly in pride. But in general I shall say, that there be two sorts of pride, one bodily, the other spiritual. Bodily pride is of fleshly living men, spiritual is of hypocrites and hereticks. These three sin deadly in pride, I meane such fleshly living men as St. Paul speaks of; *If ye live after the flesh ye shall dye.* Then say I thus; That a worldly man, who loveth and seeketh principally the worship of himselfe, and chooseth the liking of it as the rest of his heart, and the end of his blisse, he sinneth deadly. But

But now thou wilt say, who doth choose the love *And when*  
of his worship, credit, or honour, instead of his God? *Venial.*

I answer, that he that loveth his worship, as for to seeme better and greater of estate then any other, and travelleth about it as much as he can; if he love it so much that for the getting, or keeping, or the saving of it, he breaketh the Commandement of God, or breaketh love and charity to his Neighbour, or is ready, or in full will to break it rather then he would forbear his worship, or lose any thing of it, either in his name, or in his estate, or of fulfilling his will; soothly he sinneth deadly, for he loveth his worship, and chooseth it more then the love of God and of his Neighbour. And neverthelesse the man that sinneth thus deadly, will say with his mouth, that he will not choose pride for his God, but he beguileth himselfe, for he chooseth it for his God in his deeds.

Neverthelesse, another worldly man that loveth his owne worship and pursueth after it, if he love it not so much, that he would not for the getting or the saving of it do a deadly sinne, or breake charity to his neighbour, he sinneth not deadly but venially, more or lesse according to the measure of his love and of his liking, with other circumstances. *And in whom.*

But a man or woman that disposeth himselfe to live contemplatively, if it be so that he forsake himselfe as to his owne will, and offer up himselfe wholly to God with a full generall will, that he will not sinne in pride wittingly, nor have any joy in himself wilfully, but onely in God, as farre as he can, and may; And notwithstanding after this full will offered up to God, feeleth many stirrings of vain-glory, and delighteth in them for the time, (because at the first he did not so well perceive them) this liking is but venial sinne, and namely if it be so, that when he cometh to himselfe, he reproveth himselfe, and withstandeth this stirring with displeasure of his will, and asketh mercy and helpe of God; Then the liking which before was  
some

\* *Mede.*

some sin, our Lord of his mercy soon forgiveth it; and moreover he shall have \* reward for his good travell in withstanding it.

\* *Homely.*  
*Who are*  
*Gods speci-*  
*al servants.*

And this is a courtesie of our Lord, granted to all those who are specially his servants and \* domesticks of his Court, as are all those that for his love forsake with a good true will all worldly and all fleshly sinne, and give themselves wholly both body and soule unto his service, with all their might and cunning, as do truly Anchorites inclosed, and all truly religious persons, who for the love of God and salvation of their owne soules enter into any Religious order approved by holy Church: Or else if it be so, that they enter first for worldly respects, or for their bodily sustenance, or some other such; if they repent them, and turn it into a spirituall respect, as for the service of God: These, as long as they keep this will, and pursue it as well as their frailty will permit, are true religious persons.

Also what man or woman soever he be, in what degree soever he liveth in holy Church, Priest, Clerk, or Layman, Widow, Maid, or Wife, that will for the love of God and salvation of his owne soule forsake all the worshippes and likings of this world, in the world, in his heart truly and fully betwixt God and himselfe, and all unnecessary businesse and earthly things, even to what he hath bare need of, and offer up his will intirely to be his servant to his power, in the constant exercise of devout prayers, and holy thoughts, with other good deeds that he may do bodily and ghostly, and keepeth his will whole to God stedfastly, all such are Gods speciall servants in holy Church. And for this good will and good purpose that they have by the gift of God, they shall increase in grace and in charity here all their life long; And they shall have for this special will, a special reward in the blisse of heaven above other chosen soules, who offered not wholly their will and their body to Gods service, neither openly nor privately as they did. All these

these whom I call Gods servants , and of his Court more speciall, if they through frailty and ignorance, when they seele such stirrings of vaine-glory , for the time delight therein , and perceive not that they do so , for that their reason and senses are letted through that liking which they seele , so that they cannot so well see those stirrings , they sinne not deadly in this liking of vain-glory ; for that will that they have in generall set in their heart before , to please God, and to forsake all manner of sin, if they knew it ; keepeth them here , that they sin not deadly in such stirrings, and in all other that come of frailty , and will keepe them still as long as the ground of that will is kept whole.

I say moreover for thy comfort , and for the comfort of all others who live in the state of Anchorites enclosed , and also by Gods grace , for the comfort of all them that enter into any religious order approved in holy Church , that all those ( who through the mercy of God ) among them shall be saved , shall have a speciall reward , and a singular worship in the blisse of heaven , for their state of living before other soules that had not that state in holy Church , though they were never so holy ; which worship is better then all the worship of this world without comparison ; for if thou couldst see what it is , thou wouldst not for the worship of this world , if thou mightest have it without sin , change thy state either of Anchoret or of religious , neither loose that singular reward in heaven, which reward is called the *Accidentall Reward*.

Neverthelesse that other men may not mistake this that I say , therefore I shall say it more plainly. Thou shalt understand that there be two rewards in the blisse of heaven, which our Lord giveth to chosen souls. The one is *soveraigne and principall*, and is called *The essentiall reward* , and that is the knowing and loving of God according to the

*How divers states in holy Church shall have divers rewards in heaven.*

*There be two special rewards in heaven.*

*The soveraign or essentiall.*

measure



measure of charity given by God to the soule while she lived here in mortall body. This reward is best, and soveraigne, for it is God himselfe, and is common to all the soules that shall be saved, in what state or degree soever they live in *Holy Church*, more or lesse, according to the quantity and the muchnesse of their charity in this life, what degree soever they live in. For he that loveth God by charity most, shall have most reward in the blisse of Heaven; for he shall there love God and know him most, and that is the *Soveraigne*, or *Essentiall* reward, and according to this reward it may and shall fall out, that some manner of man or woman, as a Lord, or a Lady, Knight, or Esquire, Merchant, or Ploughman, or what degree he be, in man or woman, may, and shall have more reward then some Priest, or Fryer, Monke, or Chanon, or Anchoret inclosed. And why so? Soothly because he loved God more in charity.

*The secondary or accidental.*

*\*Manhood.*

Another Reward there is that is *Secondary* (or *Accidental*) which our Lord giveth for special good deeds, which a man doth voluntarily, over that he is bound to do. Of these deeds three principall ones the Doctors of holy Church do make mention of, *viz. Martyrdome, Preaching, and \*Virginity.* These workes, in as much as they passe all others in excellency, shall have a speciall reward, which is called an *Aureola*, which is nought else but a singular worship and a speciall token ordained by God for reward of that speciall deed they did above others, over and above that *Soveraigne* or *Essentiall* Reward of the love of God, which is common to him and to all others. Right so it is of all other speciall good deeds which if they be done sincerely, are specially acceptable in the sight of God, and in the judgement of holy Church are very excellent, as are the enclosing of Anchorets, done by the Authority of Holy Church, also entring into Religion approved; and the stricter that the Religion is, the more excellent

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is the deed in the judgement of Holy Church.

Also after these, and beneath these, are the taking of the order of Priest, either for cure of mens soules, and to minister the Sacraments of Holy Church, or else for singular Devotion to please God, and profit our Neighbour, by the sacrifice of the precious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Soothly these are speciall deeds, and declared to be excellent by the judgement of *Holy Church*, and in the sight of our Lord; when they are done truly for God, they are excellent, and shall have speciall reward, each man in his degree, in the blisse of Heaven. The state of Bishop and Prelate is above all these deeds, as to the *Accidentall* reward. That this is so, appeareth out of Holy Writ, where it saith thus in the Prophet *Daniel*. But goe thou untill the time prefixed, and thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot, untill the end of the dayes, which is to say thus much: The Angel when he had shewed *Daniel* the secrets of God, he said to him thus; Goe thou to the rest of thy bodily Death, and thou shalt stand in thy lot as a Prophet at the last day. And verily as *Daniel* shall stand as a Prophet at the last day of Doome, and have the worship and excellency of a Prophet above the *Soveraigne* blessed reward of the love and sight of God. Right so shalt thou stand as an Anchorite in that lot, and a Religious in the lot of the Religious, and so shall it be with other excellent deeds, and have a singular worship, passing other men at the day of Doom.

Dan. 12.

S E C T:

## SECT. II.

*How pride in Hereticks and in Hypocrites  
is deadly sinne.*

**A**N Heretick sinneth deadly in pride, for he chooseth his rest and delight in his own opinion, and in his owne sayings, for he imagineth them to be true; which opinion or sayings are against God and holy Church, and therefore he sinneth mortally in pride, for he loveth himselfe and his owne will and wit so much, that though it be plainly against the Ordinance of holy Church, he will not leave it, but resteth thereon, as upon the truth, and so maketh he it his God, but he beguileth himselfe, for God and holy Church are so united and accorded together, that who so doth against the one, doth against both; And therefore he that saith he loveth God, and keepeth his biddings, and despiseth holy Church, and setteth at nought the Lawes and Ordinances thereof, made by the head and supream thereof, appointed to govern all Christians, he lyeth; for he chooseth not God, but chooseth the love of himselfe, contrary to the love of God, and so sinneth mortally. And wherein he imagineth most to please God, he most displeaseth him; for he is blinde, and will not see.

**Prov. 14.**

Of this blindnesse and this false resting of an Heretick in his owne feeling, speaketh the Wise man thus: *There is a way that seemeth right to a man and the last end of it bringeth him to endless death.* This way specially is called Heresie, for other fleshly sinners that sin mortally, and lye therein, commonly condemn themselves, and feeble biting in conscience, because they go not the right way; But an Heretick supposeth that he doth well, and teacheth well, yea and that no man

man doth and teacheth so well as he, and so judgeth his way to be right, and therefore seeleth he no biting of conscience, nor humility in heart. And soothly, if God of his great mercy sendeth him not humility at the last end, he goeth to Hell. And nevertheless yet weeneth he to have done well, and that he shall get the blisse of Heaven for his teaching.

The Hypocrite also sinneth deadly, in pride. He is an Hypocrite that chooseth vaine joy in himselfe, as the rest and full delight of his heart in this manner. *The hypocrite sinneth mortally in pride.*

When a man doth many good deeds bodily and ghostly, and then is put into his minde by the suggestion of the Enemy, the beholding of himselfe and those good deeds, how good, how holy he is, how worthly in mens deem, and how high in Gods sight, above other men; he perceiveth this stirring, and receiveth it willingly, for he judgeth it to be good, and from God, forasmuch as it is true, (for he doth these good deeds better then other men) And when it is received thus by consent of his will, there ariseth from it in his heart so great a love and delight in himselfe, that he hath so much grace, that for the time it ravisheth his minde out of all other thoughts both corporall and spiritual, and setteth it upon vaine joy in himselfe, as on a rest of his heart. This ravishing in spirituall pride is delectable, and therefore he keepeth it, holdeth it, and nourisheth it as much as he can. For this love and delight he prayeth, watcheth, weareth hair-cloth, and doth other afflictions, and all these trouble him but little. He pretends to love God, and thanketh him sometime with his mouth, sometime wringeth a teare out of his eye, and then he thinketh all safe enough: But soothly, all this is for love of himselfe which he chooseth, and mistaketh for love and joy in God, and therein lyes all his sin. Not that he willingly chooseth sinne, as it is sin, but chooseth this delight and joy that he takes for good, as the rest and repose of his soule. Which because he doth



Job 20.

doth without any striving against it, or displeasure at it in his will, therefore is it sinne; for he judgeth it to be a joy in God, and it is not so, and therefore sinneth he mortally. Job saith thus of an Hypocrite, *The joy of an hypocrite is as it were for a moment: If his pride rise up even to the heavens, and his head touch the clouds, at the last end he shall be cast out as a dung-heap.* The joy of an Hypocrite is but a point, for if he worship himselfe never so much, and joy in himselfe never so much all his life-time, and bepaint himselfe with all his good deeds, in the sight and praisings of the world, at the last it will prove right nought but sorrow and pain

But thou wilt say; Sure there be few or none such that are so blinde as to hold and chioose vaine joy in themselves for joy in God

Gal 6.

As to this I cannot answer, nor will, though I could; onely I will tell thee this one thing, that there be many Hypocrites, and neverthelesse they thinke themselves to be none, and that there be many that dread and feare themselves to be Hypocrites, and soothly are none; who is the one, and who is the other. God knowes, and none but he. Who so will humbly dread, shall not be beguiled, and who so thinketh himselfe secure, he may lightly fall. For St. Paul saith; *Who so esteemeth himselfe to be something, whereas indeed he is nothing, he beguileth himself.*

## S E C T. III.

*A short Exhortation to Humility and Charity, with a Conclusion how a man may know how much pride he hath in him.*

**N**OW by what hath been said, thou mayest (if thou wilt understand them) conceive comfort for thy degree of living, and also matter of Humility:  
For

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For though it be true, that (in case thou come to heaven) thou shalt there receive so much reward in speciall, for thy state of life. Neverthelesse it may be, that there is many a Wise, and many a Woman, living at large in the world, that shall be nearer God then thou, and shall love God more, and know him better then thou, for all thy religious state, and that ought to be a shame to thee. Yet if thou labour to get love and charity, as fully and as perfectly as those that live in the world, (for thou mayest have it by the gift of God, as much as they that live in worldly businesse.) Then shalt thou have as much of the *Soveraigne* or *Essentiall* reward as they; and moreover shalt also have another singular and accidental reward and worship, for thy state of Religion which the others shall not have. If then thou wilt do well, be humble, and forget thy state, as if it were right nought; For in sooth it is so, that is, right nought in it selfe: And let thy desire and businesse be, to destroy sinne, and to get charity, and humility, and other ghostly vertues, for therein lyeth all.

I have well nigh forgotten that Image I spake of, *How a man*  
but now I turne againe thereto. If thou wilt know *may know*  
how much pride is therein, thou mayest try it *how much*  
thus: Looke to it wisely, and flatter not thy selfe. *pride is in*  
If loving, praying, or worshiping, or humane favors *him.*  
of worldly men or others, be pleasing to thy heart,  
and thou turnest them into vaine gladnesse. and well  
paying of thy selfe, thinking secretly in thy heart,  
that men ought to praise thy life, and reward thy  
speeches more then other mens: And also on the contrary,  
if it be so, that when men reprove thee, & set thee  
at nought, hold thee for a foole, or an hypocrite, or  
slander thee, or speak evill of thee falsely, and in any  
other way disease thee unreasonably, and for this  
thou seekest in thy heart a grievous heaviness against  
them, and a great rising in thy heart, with an unwillingnesse  
to suffer any shame or disgrace in the  
G fight

sight of the world ; If I say it be thus with thee , it is a token that there is much pride in this darke image, seem thou never so holy in the sight of men. For though these stirrings be but little and veniall, Neverthelesse they shew well, that there is much pride hid in the ground of thy heart , as the Fox dareth in his den. These stirrings , with many more , spring so fast out of this image, that thou scarcely canst do any good deed but it will be mingled with some pride or vaine delight in thy selfe , and so with thy pride thou defilest all thy good deeds , and makest them loathsome in the sight of thy Lord. I say not that they are lost , because they are mingled with this pride. But I say that those good deeds are not so pleasant to thy Lord, as they would be , if they were simple , and truly rooted in the vertue of Humility. And therefore if thou wilt have cleanness of heart , to come to the love of God , it behoveth thee not onely to flye the rest and repose of thy heart in vain-glory , by willing consenting to pride , and also the wretchlesse liking therein out of frailty against thy will , but also the very feeling it selfe of pride , as well as thou canst, which will not be done , unlesse thou be full quick and diligent about the keeping of thy heart, as I shall tell thee hereafter.

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## CHAP. VI.

### S E C T. I.

*Of Envy and Wrath and their branches , and how in stead of sinne, the person is often hated.*

**T**Urne this image upside downe , and looke well therein , and thou shalt finde two members or limbs of envy and anger fastned thereto , with severall branches springing out of them , which hinder the love and charity which thou oughtest to have toward thy

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thy Neighbour. The branches of these two sins are *The branches of envy and wrath.* these, Hatred, evill suspicion, false, and rash, or unskilfull judging, melancholy, risings of heart against them, despising, unkindnesse, and backbiting, or other ill speaking of them, misliking, unskilful, or causelesse blaming of them, misconstruing their words or deeds, anguish and heavinesse against those that despise us, or speak any evill of us, or speak against us, a joy or gladnesse at their paine, a felnesse or bitterness against sinfull men and others, that will not do as we thinke they should do, with great desire and eagernesse of heart (under colour of charity and justice) that they were well punished and chastised for their sin.

Such motions and stirrings as these seem good; Nevertheless if thou ransack it well, thou shalt finde it more fleshly and sensual sometimes, against the person, then spiritual against the sin; for thou shouldst love the man, be he never so sinfull, and hate the sin in every man what ever he be. Many are beguiled in this, for they set the bitter instead of the sweet, and take darknesse instead of light, contrary to the Prophet, saying; *Woe to you who call evill good, and good evill, putting darknesse for light, and light for darknesse, putting bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.* Thus do all they, who when they should hate the sinne of their Neighbour, and love his person, hate the person, instead of the sinne, and imagine that they hate the sin. Wherefore it is a speciall craft, and art by it selfe, who so can do it well. Isa. 5.



## SECT. II.

*That it is a Mastery and noble skill to love mens persons, and yet wisely to hate their sins, and how.*

**I**T is no Mastery to watch and fast till thy head ake, nor to run to Rome or Jerusalem on pilgrimage upon thy bare feet, nor for to stirre about and preach; as if thou wouldst turne all men by thy preaching: Nor is it any Mastery to build Churches or Chappels, or to feed poor men, and build Hospitals. But it is a Mastery for a man to love his Neighbour in charity, and wisely hate his sinne, and love the man: For though it be true, that all those deeds before said be good in themselves, yet are they common to good men and to bad, for every man may do them, if that he would, and have wherewith. And for thee to do that which every man may-do, I hold it no mastery. But to love thy Neighbour in charity, and hate his sinne can no man do, save onely good men, who have it by the gift of God, and not by their owne travell, as St. Paul saith; *Love and charity is shed abroad in your hearts by the holy Ghost, which is given to you.* And therefore it is more precious and more dainty to come by. All other good deeds without this, make not a man good, nor worthy of the blisse of heaven, but this alone, and onely this maketh a man good, and all his good deeds to be medefull. All other gifts of God and works of man are common to good and bad, to the chosen and the reprobate; but this gift of charity is proper onely to good and chosen souls.

*How a man  
may learn  
his hard  
lesson.*

And therefore for the learning of this hard lesson, thou must understand and consider, that a good man for the love of God fasteth, watcheth, goeth on pilgrimage, and forsaketh all the pleasures of the world sincerely in his heart, without faining, and he hath his reward

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reward in heaven: & an hypocrite doth the same deeds out of vain-glory, and for love of himself, and receiveth his reward here. Also a true Preacher of Gods Word, filled with charity and humility, sent of God, and received and approved by the Church, if he preach and teach Gods Word, shall have a speciall reward of God; that is, *the Aureola* for his preaching. And an Hypocrite or an Heretick that hath no humility nor charity, nor is sent of God, nor yet of holy Church, if they preach, they have their reward here. Also a good man living in the world, for the love of God buildeth many Churches, Chappels, Abbeyes, hospitals, and doth other many good deeds of mercy, and he shall have his reward in the blisse of Heaven, not for the deed in it selfe, but for the good will and the charity that he hath in him by the gift of God for to do these good deeds. Another man out of vanity of himselfe, and worship and pleasing of the world, and for his own name doth the same good deeds, and hath his reward here. The cause in all these is, that the one hath charity, and the other none; but which is the one, and which is the other, our Lord knoweth, & none but he.

From this therefore we are to learn these 2 lessons. First, that we should love and worship all men in our hearts, and approve and think well of, and receive all their deeds that have the likeness of goodness, though the doers be bad in the sight of God, except they be the deeds of known & open Hereticks, or of open cursed (or excommunicated) men; for of these two we are specially to flie & eschew their company, and coming amongst them. And we are also to reprove and refuse their deeds, seem they never so good, as long as they are Rebels to God and holy Church. And if a worldly cursed (or excommunicated man) build a Church, or feed poore men, thou mayest safely hold and judg such his doings to be naught, and deem them as they are. Also if an open Heretick, who is a rebell to holy Church, preach and teach, though he convert a hundred thousand souls, thou maist hold the deed,

*We are to  
love and  
thinke well  
of all men.*

as to himselfe, right nought ; for these men are openly out of charity , without which all is nought that a man doth.

*None can truly love his Neighbour but he that hath charity.*

*1 Cor. 13.*

Secondly , That it is a great Mastery for a man to know how , and to be able to love his Neighbour in charity ; All which may be plainly proved by St. Pauls words, thus ; *If I speake with the tongues of men and Angels, if I have not charity, I am right nought ; and if I have so great faith that I can overturne hills , and beare them away, and have not charity , I am right nought. And also though I had all manner of knowledge of all mysteries , and if I give all that I have to the poore , and my body to be burnt , and have not charity , it profiteth me right nought.*

Here it seemeth by St. Pauls words, that a man may do all good deeds bodily without charity , and that charity is nought else but to love God, and his neighbour as himselfe. How should then any wretched Caitiffe upon earth what-ever he be, have any delight, or trult, or security in himselfe for any thing he doth , or is able to do with all his bodily powers or natural wit , sith all this is nought worth without love and charity to his neighbour. And this charity cannot be gotten

*A difficult thing to know whether we have Charity.*

*\* Sikerly. None hath charity but he that is humble.*

*Rom. 8.*

by his owne working , for it is the free gift of God, sent onely into an humble soule, as St. Paul saith. Who then dare be so bold as to say, *I have Christ*, or *I am charity*. Verily no man can say it \* securely, or of a certainty , but he that is perfectly and truly humble, other men may trow of themselves , and hope that they be in charity by tokens ; But he that is perfectly humble seeleth it , and therefore may say it securely. Thus humble was St. Paul , and therefore said he thus of himselfe ; *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? shall tribulation , or anguish, or distresse, &c ? And he answereth himselfe, and saith , I am perswaded that no creature shall be able to separate me from the Charity of God in Christ Jesus.* Many men do deeds of Charity, and have

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have no charity as I have said. To reprove a sinner for his sin to his amendment, in a convenient time, is a deed of charity; but to hate the sinner in stead of the sinne, is against charity. He that is verily humble, can part the one from the other, and none but he. For though a man had all morall vertues of all the Philosophers, he could not do this; he could be able to hate sin in other men, (for he hateth it in himselfe) but he could not be able to love the man in charity, with all his philosophy. Also if a man had the knowledge of all Books and Divinity, and be not withall truly humble, he shall lightly stumble and erre in this point, and take the one for the other. But Humility is worthy to receive a gift from God, which cannot be gotten or learned by cunning of man, and therefore he that is humble, can hate the sin, and truly love the man.

But now peradventure thou beginnest to be afraid for that which I have said, that charity cannot be gotten by any worke that thou canst do; how shalt thou then do?

*Charity is gotten only by humility.*

To this I answer, that there is nothing so hard to get as charity; this is truth, as to the getting of it by our own travel and labour; And on the contrary, I say, that there is no gift of God that may so lightly or easily be had as charity, for our Lord giveth no gift so freely, nor so gladly, nor so commonly as he doth it. How shalt thou then have it saist thou? Be meek and lowly in spirit, & thou shalt have it, and what is lighter to be done then to be humble? soothly nothing. Then it followeth, that there is nothing so lightly to be had as charity, and therefore thou need not be much afraid, be humble, and have it. Thus saith St. James, *Our Lord resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.* Which grace is properly Charity; for according to the measure of thy Humility, so shalt thou have charity; If thou have Humility imperfectly onely in will, not in affection, then hast thou imperfect charity, which indeed is good, for it sufficeth for salva-



Psal. 139.  
16.

who is truly  
humble.

tion, as David saith, *Lord with the eyes of mercy thou seest my imperfection.* But if thou have humility perfectly, then shalt thou have perfect charity, and this is best. The other we must necessarily have if we will be saved: This we should ever desire and labour for. If thou aske me now who is perfectly humble, I shall tell thee no more concerning Humility at this time but this, *He is humble that truly knoweth himselfe as he is.*

### S E C T. III.

*How a man shall know how much Wrath and Envy is hid in the ground of his heart, and how he may know whether he love his enemies, and the examples we have thereof in our Saviour.*

**N**OW turn we again to this Image. If thou wilt try how much Anger and Envy is hid in thy heart, which thou seelest and perceivest not: Look well and behold thy self wisely, when such stirrings of anger and envy against thy neighbor spring out of thy heart. The more that thou art stirred by melancholy or wicked will against him, the more is this image in thee. For the more thou grudgest by impatience; either against God, for any tribulation or sicknesse, or other bodily disease sent by him, or against thy neighbour, for ought that he doth against thee, the lesse is the image of Jesus reformed in thee. I say not that such grudgings or fleshly angriness are deadly sins; but I say that they hinder the cleanness of heart and peace of conscience, that thou canst not have perfect charity, by the which thou shouldst come to life *Contemplative*; For that end is the purpose of all my saying; that thou shouldst not onely cleanse thy heart from deadly sins, but also from veniall as much as thou canst: And that the ground of sin might by grace of Jesus Christ be some-what shaken in thee.

For

For though it be so that thou seelest no evill against thy neighbor for a time, yet art thou not secure that the ground of Anger is quenched in thee; neither yet art thou Lord and Mr. of the vertue of Charity. For let him but touch thee a little angerly, or by a shrewd word, and thou shalt see presently whether thy heart be yet made whole by perfect charity. The more thou art stirred and evill-willed against his person, the further art thou from charity; and if thou be nothing stirred against his person, neither by any angry carriage or gesture outwardly, nor by any privy hate in thy heart, either to despise, or judge him, or undervalue, or set him at nought; but the more shame or villany he doth to thee by word or deed, the more pittie and compassion thou hast of him, as thou wouldst have of a man that were out of his wits, and thinkest that thou canst not finde in thy heart to hate him (because love is so good in it selfe) but pray for him, and helpe him, and desire his amendment, not onely with thy mouth, as hypocrites can do, but with affection of love in thy heart, then hast thou perfect charity to thy neighbour

This charity had St. Stephen perfectly, when he prayed for them that stoned him to death. This charity counselled Christ to those that would be his perfect followers, when he said thus; *Love your enemies, doe good to them that hate you, pray for them that persecute you.* And therefore if thou wilt be one of Christs followers, be like him in this craft. Learne to love thy enemies and sintull men, for all these are thy Neighbours. Looke and bethinke thee how Christ loved Judas, who was both his deadly enemy, and a sinfull Caitiffe; how goodly Christ was to him, how benigne, how courteous, and how lowly to him, whom he knew to be damnable; and neverthelesse he chose him to his Apostle, and sent him to preach with his other Apostles; he gave him power to work miracles; he shewed the same good cheer to him in word & deed as he did to other Apostles; he washed his feet,

*To love our enemies.*

Matth. 6.

*After the example of our Saviour.*

and

▪ *Soothfast-  
ness.*

▪ *Skilful.*

and fed him with his precious blood, and preached to him as he did to his other Apostles ; he bewrayed him not openly, (for he did it privily) he misca<sup>d</sup> him not, despised him not, never spake evill of him ( notwithstanding if he had done all these things, he had said nothing but truth ; ) Moreover when *Judas* took him, he kissed him, and called him his friend. All this charity shewed Chriit unto *Judas*, whom ke knew to be damnable, and this he did in no way of counterfeiting or flattering, but in reality and \* truth of good love and cleane charity. For though it was true that *Judas* was not worthy to have any gift from God, or any signe of love for his wickednesse ; Neverthelesse it was worthy and \* seemly that our Lord should shew himselfe to be that which he is, and that is *love* and goodnesse to all his creatures, as he was to *Judas*. I say not that he loved him for his sinne, nor that he loved him as one of his chosen, as he did *St. Peter* ; but he loved him inasmuch as he was his creature, and shewed him tokens of love, if he would have beene mended thereby. Follow thou his example somewhat as much as thou canst ; For though thou art shut up in a house as to thy body, neverthelesse in thy heart ( where the seate of love is ) thou mayest have part in such love to thy Neighbour, as I have spoken of.

Who so thinketh himselfe to be in his life a perfect lover and follower of Christs teaching ( as some men perhaps esteem themselves to be, because they preach and teach, and are poor in worldly goods, as Christ was ) and cannot follow Christ in this love and charity, to love their neighbours, even every man, both good and bad, friend and foe, without feigning, or flattery, or despising him in his heart, without angri-nesse or malicious reproving, soothly he beguileth himselfe : The nearer he thinketh himselfe to be to Christs example the further is he off ; for Christ said to them that would be his Disciples thus ; *This is my bidding, that you should love one another, as I have loved you.*

John 6.

you. For if ye love as I have loved, then are ye my Disciples.

But now thou wilt say; *How shall I love him that is bad as well and as truly as him that is good?*

*How a man should love the bad as well as the good.*

To this I say thus, that thou shalt love both good and bad in charity, but not for the same cause as I shall tell how. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy selfe;* now thou shalt love thy selfe onely *in God*, or else *for God*. *In God* thou lovest thy selfe, when thou art righteous, and vertuous through grace, and lovest not thy selfe but onely for that righteousness and vertues that God giveth thee, then lovest thou thy selfe *in God*, for thou lovest not thy selfe, but *God*. Also thou lovest thy self *for God*, when being in deadly sin, thou desirest to be made righteous and vertuous, for then thou lovest not thy selfe as thou art (for thou art unrighteous) but as thou wouldst be. Right so shalt thou love thy neighbour; If he be good and righteous, thou shalt love him by charity *in God* onely, in that he is good and righteous; for then lovest thou God (who is goodness and righteousness) in him & so thou lovest him more then if he were bad or in deadly sin. As for example, thy enemies who hate thee, or any other of whom thou hast full evidence that they are not in grace; yet notwithstanding shalt thou love them, not as they are, nor as good and righteous men (for they are bad and unrighteous) but thou shalt love them *for God*, that they may be good and righteous. And so shalt thou hate nothing in them, but that thing which is contrary to righteousness, and that is sin. This is as I understand the Doctrine of St. *Austine*, for to distinguish the love of the man from the hatred of his sin, and the love of thy neighbour. He that is humble, or desires truly to be humble, can thus love his neighbour, and none but he.



## CHAP. VII.

*Of Covetousnesse, and how a man may know how much of it is hid in his heart.*

**H**Eave up this Image, and look well about it, and into it, and then shalt thou see covetousnesse and love of earthly things possess a great part of this image, though it seem little of it. Thou hast forsaken riches, and the having much of this world, and art shut up in a Cell, but hast thou cleanly forsaken the love of all this? I feare not yet, for it is lesse mastery to forsake worldly goods, then to forsake the love of them. Peradventure thou hast not forsaken thy coveteousness, but only hast changed it from great things unto small: from a pound unto a penny, and from a silver dish unto a dish of an half-penny. This is but a simple change, thou art no good Merchant. These examples are childish; Nevertheless they signifie much more. If thou believe not what I say, put thy selfe upon the tryal. If thou have love and delight in the having and holding of any thing that thou hast, how meane soever it be, with the which love thou feedest thy heart for a time: Or if thou have a desire & yearning for to have something that thou hast not, with the which desire thy heart is disquieted and stumbled through unreasonable thinking of the thing, that the pure desire of vertue and of God cannot rest therein; this is a signe that there is coveteousnesse in this image. And if thou wilt put thy selfe further to the tryal, look if any thing that thou hast be taken away from thee by violence, or by borrowing, or any other way, so that thou canst not get it againe, and for this thou art disquieted, angered, and troubled in thine heart, both for the losse of that thing which thou wouldst have againe, and canst not; and also art stirred against him that hath it,

to

to strive and chide with him, that may restore it, and will not, this is a token that thou lovest worldly goods. For thus do worldly men, when their goods and riches are taken from them, they are heavy, sorry, and angry, chiding and striving with them that have them, openly both by word and deed; But thou dost all this in thy heart privily, where God seeth, and therein thou art in more default then a worldly man; for thou hast forsaken in appearance the love of worldly things, but a worldly man hath not so, and therefore he is excused, though he strive and pursue for his goods by lawfull meanes, for to have them againe.

But now sayest thou, that it behoveth thee to have thy necessities of such things as belong unto thee, as well as a worldly man. I grant well thereto; but thou shouldst not love it for it selfe, nor have liking in the holding nor in the keeping, nor feel sorrow and heavinesse in the loosing, or in the with-drawing of it. For as St. Gregory saith; *As much sorrow as thou hast in loosing of a thing, so much love hadst thou in the keeping of it.* And therefore if so be thy heart were made whole, and thou hadst truly felt a desire of spirituall things, and therewith hadst a true sight of the least spiritual thing that is, thou wouldst set at nought all the love and liking of any earthly thing, it would not cleave to thee.

For to love or have more then thou reasonably needest, onely for lust and liking, is a great fault. Also to fixe thy love upon the thing which thou needest, for the thing it self is a fault also, but not so great. But to have and use that thing that thou needest, without love of it, more then nature and need requireth, without which the thing cannot be used, is no fault.

Soothly in this point I fear that many who have taken upon them the state and likeness of poverty are much letted & hindred in their pursuit of the love of God; I accuse no man, nor reprove any state, for in each state there be some good, and some otherwise; but one thing  
I say

say to every man or woman that hath taken the state of voluntary poverty, whether he be religious or secular, or what degree he be in, as long as his love and his affection is bounden and fastned, and as it were glued with the love of any earthly thing, which he hath, or would have, he cannot have nor feel soothfastly the cleane love, and the cleare sight of spirituall things. For St. *Austin* said to our Lord thus; *Lord he loveth thee but little, that loveth any thing with thee, which he loveth not for thee.* For the more love and coveteousnesse of any earthly thing is with thee, the lesse is the love of God in thy heart: For though it be so, that this love of earthly things putteth them not out of charity; but if it be so much, it strangleth the love of God and of their neighbour; Verily it hindereth and letteth them from the fervour of charity, and also from that special reward which they should have in the blisse of heaven for perfect poverty, and that is a great losse if thou couldst see it. For who so could understand the spiritual reward, how good, how precious, and how worthy it is, (for it is everlasting) he would not for the love of all earthly joy, or having all earthly things (though he might have them without sin) hinder, nor lessen the least reward of the blisse of Heaven, which he might have if that he would; But God knows I speake more then I do my selfe. But I pray thee do thus as I say, by the grace of God, if thou canst, or any other man that will, for it would be a comfort to my heart (though I have it not in my self, that which I say) that I might have it in thee, or in any other creature, which hath received more plenty of his grace then I

But see now then, since Coveteousnesse in the naked ground of it, letteth a man or woman so much from the spirituall feeling of the love of God; how much more then doth it let and cumber worldly men and women, who by all their wits and bodily business night and day, study and travell how they may get riches and plenty of worldly goods? They can have

no other delight but in worldly things ; nay they will not, for they seek it not. I say no more of them at this time ; for in this writing I spake not to them. But this I say, that if they would see, or could see what they do, they would not do so.

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## CHAP. IV.

### SECT. I.

*Of Gluttony, and how a man shall know when he sinneth not in eating and drinking, and when he sinneth venially, and when deadly.*

**S**Till mayest thou see more in this Image, though it be darke, viz. sensual love to thy selfe, in gluttony, sloath, and lechery. These fleshly likings make a man full beastly, and far from the inward savour of the love of God, and from the clear sight of spiritual things. But thou wilt say, that thou must needs eate and drinke, and sleep, which thou canst not do without liking, therefore thou thinkest this liking is no sin.

As unto this I say, That if in eating, drinking, and other takings of necessities for thy body thou observe and keep measure ; which is, that thou do but what is needfull for nature, and thou receivest or admittest no further pleasure or delight in the taking, then the nature of the thing doth needs bring with it ; and all this thou dost not of purpose to please thy sensuality, but for ghostly delight which thou feelest in thy soule, and the upholding of thy body in the service of God, I grant that for a truth, thou then sinnest right nought therein, but mayest well eate and sleep in that manner as thou hast mentioned.

Soothly and without doubt, I am full farre from  
knowing



knowing how to do better in this point, and farther from doing of it; for to eate I have by kinde or nature, but to skill how to eate, I cannot but by the grace of God. St. Paul had this cunning by the grace of God, as he saith himselfe thus; *I am cunning in all things through him that strengtheneth me*; for I can hunger, and I can eate, I can with plenty, and I can with poverty, I can do all things. St. Austine saith thus to our Lord; Lord thou hast taught me that I should take meate as a Medicine; hunger is a sicknesse of my nature, and meate is a medicine thereof. Therefore the liking and delight that cometh therewith, and accompanieth eating, inasmuch as it is naturall, and follows o' necessity, it is no sin: but when it passeth into lust, and into a voluntary and sought or intended pleasure, then it is sin.

*A hard thing to distinguish the pleasure in eating from necessity.*

Therefore here lyeth all the mastery and skill, to be able to distinguish wisely, need from lust and voluntary liking, being so knit together, that the one cometh with the other. So that it is hard to take the one (which is the meate or drink) as need requireth, and to reject or not to admit the other, viz. the voluntary and willingly admitted lust and liking, which often cometh under the colour of need.

*A man may lawfully admit the pleasure felt in the taking of meate, so he take it not for the pleasures sake, nor make the pleasure to be the end or cause of the taking of it; but necessity to be the cause, and the pleasure as a thing necessarily accompanying it; and perhaps too as a thing that makes the meate more grateful to a weake stomach, and so digestible.*

Neverthelesse, sith it is so, that need is the ground of this, and that need is no sin; for be a man never so holy, it behoveth him to eate, and drinke, and sleep. therefore the lust and liking that cometh under the colour of this need, and often exceedeth this need, is the lesse sin. For it is true, that he that chooseth lust and liking of his flesh, and delight in wellfare of meate or drinke, as the full rest of his heart, that he would never have any other life nor other blisse, but live ever in such lust of his flesh,

if

if he might, it is no doubt but he sinneth deadly; for he loveth his flesh more then God. But he that lyeth in deadly sinne of pride or envy, or such other, he is so blinded by the Devil, that for the time he hath no power of his free will, and therefore he cannot well withstand fleshly likings when they come, but falleth downe willingly to them, as a beast doth to Carrion: And inasmuch as he hath no generall will before to God principally, because that he is in deadly sinne, therefore the lust of Gluttony into which he falleth easily, is to him deadly sinne, for he maketh no resistance either general or special. But another man or woman, who being in grace or Charity, hath alway a good general will to God in his soule, whether he sleep or wake, eat or drink, or whatsoever good deed he doth, so that it be not evill in it selfe; by the which will and desire he chooseth God above all things, & had rather forbear all things in the

world, then anger his God. for love of him; This will, though it be but general, is of so great vertue through the grace of our Lord Jesus, that if he fall by frailty in lust and in liking of meat and of drink, or of such other infirmity, either by exercise, in eating too much, or too often, or too greedily, or too lusty and delicately, or too soone before the set times of eating, it saveth and keepeth him from deadly sinne. And this is truth, as long as he is in charity in his other workes, and keepeth his generall will in all that hee doth; and especially if anon after such his miscarriage, he acknowledge his owne wretchedness, and cry for mercy, and be in purpos: specially to withstand such fleshly lusts for the time to come. For our Lord is good and mercifull, and forgiveth right soon these veniall sinnes and miscarriages, or excesses about meate and drinke, (by reason that the occasions of them are hardest to eschew, because of the necessity there is of seeking and taking of them for the uphold- ing of our corporal lives and healths) unto an humble soule.

*A generall will & purpose to love and serve God, keeps us from the guilt of mortall sin in these failings.*

*The ground  
of gluttony  
cannot be  
taken a-  
way.*

And these stirrings and likings of Gluttony, among all other finnes, are most excusable, and least perilous. And therefore thou shalt not rise against the ground of this sinne, as thou shalt against the ground of all other sinne, for the ground of this sinne is onely naturall need and necessity, the which thou canst not eschew, unlesse thou shouldst do worse, *viz.* slay this need, (as many unwise persons do, by destroying their bodies, or healths) whereas they should onely slay the Thiefe, and spare the true man. That is to say, slay unreasonable lust, and sensuall voluntary liking, and spare and keepe naturall liking, and corporall ability, and they do not so. But against all other finnes, thou shalt arise to destroy, not onely deadly sins and the greater venials, but also against the ground of them, by suppressing the stirrings and motions of them, and also avoyding the occasions and motives and incentives to them, as much as thou canst; but this thou canst not do here with all thy skill, for thou canst not live without meate and drink, but thou mayest live without lechery or carnall pleasure, if thou wilt, and never better then when without it. And therefore thou shalt not flie onely the deeds of it (*viz.* the doing of any externall thing against Chastity) but also thou shalt suppress and destroy within thee, all meer, inward and mental desires against the vertue of Chastity (the which mental desires or thoughts are sometimes onely venial sins, and sometimes mortall;) but also thou shalt labour against the ground of the said sin, and seek to destroy the feeling and the rising of fleshly stirrings.

*The ground of sins  
must be destroyed  
by spirituall labour  
aswel as corporal.*

But this travel & labor against the ground of Lechery must be spiritual, by prayers and spirituall vertues, and not by bodily penance onely; for wyte thou well, that if thou fast, and watch, and scourge thy selfe, and do all that thou canst, thou shalt never have cleanness and chastity, without the gift of God, and without the grace or vertue of Humility. Thou shalt sooner

ner kill thy selfe, then kill fleshly stirrings and feelings of lust and lechery, either in thy heart, or in thy flesh, by any bodily penances ; but by the grace of Jesus, in an humble soule the ground may be much stopped and destroyed , and the spring may be much dried , the which will cause true chastity in body and in soul.

The same may be said of Pride , and of Coveteousnesse, and of such other, for thou mayest live though thou wert not proud at all , nor covetous , nor luxurious, and therefore thou shalt labour to destroy the very feelings of them , as much as thou canst , and so seeke to cleanse and take away the very ground of those sins. But in Gluttony it is otherwise , because the ground thereof, which is naturall appetite and need , must remaine as long as thou livest, therefore must thou onely arise and fight against the unreasonable desires of thy naturall appetite therein, the which do creep in under pretence , and by occasion of the said just and reasonable need ; smite these unreasonable stirrings, and keep the ground whole.

## S E C T. II.

*That a man should be busie to put away and hinder all motions of sinne, but more busie about those of spirituall sins, then those of bodily.*

**A**N D therefore he that riseth against the feeling of fleshly liking in meate and drink, more fully and more sharply then against those of Pride , or Coveteousnesse, or Lechery, or Envy, (the which because they be more spiritual and lesse perceivable, seem perhaps lesse evil, & are lesse reprehended.) I say that he is half blind, for he seeth not his spiritual uncleanneses, (as of pride & envy) how foul they are in Gods sight. For I believe that if a man could see with his spiritual eye, how foule pride and coveteousness are in Gods sight,



sight, and how contrary to him ; he would more loth a stirring of pride, and the vain liking of it : And also he would more abhor and rise against that evill will of envy, or anger to his neighbour, then many a stirring or liking either of gluttony or of lechery. Nevertheless all men do not thinke so, for commonly men are more shy or troubled for to feel a stirring of fleshly sin, and have for it more sorrow and heaviness, then for great likings in vainglory, or in other ghostly sins. But they are not wise; for if they would understand the holy Scriptures, and sayings of Doctors, they should find it as I say, which I neither may nor will rehearse now.

I will not excuse them that fall in the likings & delights of Gluttony and Lechery, as if they sinned not; for I wote well that all the kinds of them are sins more or lesse, according to the measure of the lust and misbehaviour in the sin, & other likings, with consideration of how far voluntary it was with other circumstances. But my desire is, that thou mightest know and esteem all sins according as they are indeed, the greater to be the greater, as are spiritual sins, and the lesse to be the lesse, as are fleshly or sensual sins; and yet nevertheless would I have thee to hate and flie all, both bodily and spiritual with all thy might. For know thou well, that fleshly desires and unreasonable likings in meate and drinke, or any likings that belong to the body, exceeding reasonable need, though they be not alway great sins, to him that is in charity. Nevertheless to a soul that desireth cleanness and purity of heart, and a spiritual feeling of God, they are full heavy, painful and bitter, and greatly to be eschewed; for the spirit cannot feel his kindly savour within, till the flesh hath lost his beastly savour without.

And therefore if thou wilt come to cleanness of heart, thou must strive against the unreasonable stirrings of fleshly desires: But against the ground of them thou shalt not rise; for the ground of it is *Need*, as naturall hunger, which thou must necessarily feel, and must attend thereto, and satisfie it in fitting time and manner, and helpe thy selfe against it by medicine of  
meate,

## The Scale of Perfection.

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meate, as thou wouldst help thy selfe in a reasonable manner against a bodily sicknesse, that thou mayest more freely serve God both bodily and spiritually. For know thou well, that what man or woman that shall be occupied spiritually in thoughts, great paine or hunger wilfully undertaken, or bodily sicknesse, or pain in the stomach, or in the head, or in other parts of the body for want of good ruling of themselves in too much fasting, or in any other way, will much let the spirit, and much hinder him from the knowing and beholding of spiritual things, unlesse he have much grace, and be arrived to great abilities in the Contemplative life. For though it be true, that bodily pain either of penance, or of sickness or of bodily occupation, sometime letteth not the servour of love to God *in devotion*, but oft encreaseth it, yet I believe that they let the servour of love *in Contemplation*, the which may not be had nor felt \* fully, but in rest and freedome of body and soul from all the foresaid corporall pains, wants, imployments, and sollicitudes. \* Sadly.

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### SECT. III.

*What remedy a man should use against the faults in eating and drinking.*

**T**Herefore thou shalt behave thy selfe discretely about thy body, yeelding it necessities reasonably, and then let God send thee what he pleaseth, either health or sickness, take it gladly, and grudge not willingly against him.

Do as I say, take thy meate as it cometh, or provide it according to reason, and take it gladly, as a thing that thou needest; But be well ware of lust that cometh with need, eschew too much as well as too little; And having done, if after it there arise in thee a remorse or biting of conscience, that thou hast eaten too much, and thereupon thou becomest sad & heavy with

H 3

over-



## The Scale of Perfection.

overmuch bitterness against thy self, lift up the desire of thy heart to thy good Lord Jesus, and acknowledge thy self a wretch, and a beast, and ask him forgiveness, and say that thou wilt amend it; and pray that he will forgive thee; Leave off then, and think no further of it, nor strive so much with the vice, as if thou wouldst destroy it utterly, for it is not worth the doing so, neither shalt thou be ever able to bring it about that way; but set thy self about some other business bodily or ghostly, according as thou findest thy self best disposed, that thereby thou mayst profit more in other virtues, as in humility, and charity. For wote thou well, that he that hath in his desire and in his endeavours, no other respect to no other thing but Humility and Charity, always crying after them, how he may have them, he shall through such desire and manner of working, profit and increase, not only in those two virtues, but also in all other virtues together with them, as in chastity, abstinence, and such other, (though he have but a little regard to them in comparison of the other, *viz.* Humility and Charity) more in one year, then he should, without the said desire and manner of working profit in seven years, though he strive against gluttony, lechery, and such other continually, and beat himselfe with scourges each day, from morning to Even-song time.

*Humility  
and charity  
the 2 great  
Remedies.*

Set thy self therefore about *Humility* and *Charity* and using all thy diligence and industry to come by them, yet shalt thou have enough to do in getting of them. And if thou canst get them, they will direct thee, and measure thee privily and secretly, how thou shalt eate, and how thou shalt drink, and succour all thy bodily needs, that there shall no man know of it, unlesse thou thy self do tell it him, and that that thou shalt not be in perplexity, scruples, vexation, anguishment; or heaviness, nor with any lust or adhering to the delights and likings of sensuality, but shalt do all in peace of a glad conscience with all quietness and satisfaction. I have spoken more then I thought to have done in this matter, but neverthelesse do (as far as thou canst) as I say;

say, and I hope God shall make all well.

By this that I have said, thou maist in some measure see into this image of sin, and perceive how much it hinders thee. The Gospel saith, how that *Abraham* spake to the rich man that was buried in Hell, on this wise; *There is betwixt us and you a great Chaos*, that is to say, a thick darkness betwixt thee and us, that we cannot come to thee, nor thou to us. This dark image in thy soul and mine may be in like manner called a chaos, that is, a great darkness, for it letteth us that we cannot come to *Abraham*, which is *Jesus*, and it letteth him, that he will not come to us. Luke, 16.

## CH A P. IX.

*Of the five windows of this darke Image, and what cometh in by them, and how they are to be ordered.*

**L**ift up thy Lanthorn, and thou shalt see in this Image five windows, by which sin cometh into thy soule, as the Prophet saith, *Death cometh in by our windows*. These are the five senses, by which thy soule goeth out of her self, and fetcheth her delight, and seeketh her feeding in earthly things, contrary to the nobility of her owne nature. As by the eye to see curious and fair things, and so of the other senses. By the unskilful using of these senses willingly to vanities, thy soul is much letted from the sweetness of the spirituall senses within; and therefore it behoveth thee to stop these windows, and shut them, but onely when need requireth to open them. Jerem: 9.

And this would be little mastery or difficulty for thee to do, if thou didst once see thy own soule by clear understanding what it is, and how fair it is in its own nature, and so is still, were it not so overlaid with a black mantle of this foul image. But because thou knowest it not, therefore leavest thou the inward sight of thy self, and seekest thy food without, abroad, like a brute beast. Thus saith our Lord in a threatening way to a chosen The understanding of the dignity of our soule would make us forsake fleshy things.



Cantic. 1. chosen soule in holy writ ; *Thou fairest among women, if thou knowest not thy selfe, go out, and walk after the steps of the flock of thy fellowes, and feed thy kids.* And it is as much as to say, Thou soul, faire by nature, made after the likeness of God, frail in thy body as a woman, by reason of the first sin, that thou knowest not thy selfe, nor how that Angels food should be thy delights within, therefore goest thou out by thy bodily senses, and seekest thy meat and thy liking as a beast of the flock, that is as \* one out cast and rejected, and therewith thou feedest thy thoughts and thine affections, which are unclean as Goats ; It is a shame for thee to do so.

\* Reprie-  
ved.

And therefore turn home again into thy selfe, and hold thee within, and beg no more without, namely swines meate : For if thou wilt needs be a beggar, aske and crave within of thy Lord Jesus, for he is rich enough, and gladlier would give thee then thou canst ask, and run no more out as a beast of the flock, that is a worldly man or woman, that hath no delight but in his bodily senses. And if thou do thus, thy Lord Jesus will give thee all that thou needest, for he will lead thee into his wine-cellar, and make thee to tast and try his wines, which liketh thee best, for he hath many tuns. Thus a chosen soul, joying in our Lord saith of him in holy writ ; *The King brought me into his Wine-cellar.* That is to say ; Inasmuch as I forsook the drunkenness of fleshly lusts and worldly likings, which are bitter as Wormi-wood. Therefore the King of blisse the Lord Jesus led me in, that is, first into my selfe for to behold and know my selfe, and after he led me into his Cellar, that is to say, above my self, by ascending and passing into him alone, and gave me a tast of his Wine, that is for to tast a certainty of spirituall sweetnesse and heavenly joy. These are not the words of me a wretched Caitiffe living in sin, but they are the words of the Spouse of our Lord in holy writ, and these words I say to thee, to the end that thou mightest draw in thy soule from without, and follow on further as well as thou canst.

Cant. 2.

I will shew thee furthermore (for thy desire draw- *When the* eth more out of my heart, then I thought to have *use of the* said in the beginning) when the use of thy senses be *senses are* deadly sin, and when venial. Thus therefore our *deadly sin,* Lord saith in the Gospell: *A man made a great Sup-* and when *per, and called many thereto, and sent his servant at Sup-* onely *per time, after them that were bidden: The first excused* *nial.* *himselfe, and said on this wise, that he could not come, for* Luke 14. *he had bought a Farme: The other also excused himselfe,* *that he could not come, for he had bought five yokes of Oxen,* *and went to try them. The third, for that he had married* *a wife.* I forbear to speake of the first and of the last, and will tell yee of the middlemost of them, that had bought the Oxen, for he is to our purpose. Five yokes of Oxen betoken the five Senses, which are beastly as an Oxe. Now this man that was called to the Supper, was not rejected because he bought the Oxen, but because he went to try them, and so he would not come. Right so say I to thee; for to have thy senses, and to use them in need it is no sin, but if thou go voluntarily to try them by vain delights in creatures, then it is sin. And if thou choose that delight as a finall rest of thy Soul, and as a full liking, that thou carest not to have any other blis but such worldly vanities, then is it deadly, for thou choolest it as thy God, and so shalt thou be put from thy Supper; for Saint Paul forbids us to use our senses in that manner, when he said thus: *Thou shalt not goe after thy lustes,* nor voluntarily try thy likings. A man or a woman that is encombred with deadly sin, shall hardly escape deadly sin in this business, though he percieveth it not; but I hope this toucheth not thee.

Nevertheless, if thou through frailty delight thee in thy senses, and in such vanities, but yet keepest thy selfe in charity and the grace of God, as to other things, and choolest not this delight for a full rest of thy Soul, but allwayes settest up God above all things in thy desire, this sin in thee is venial; and that more or less according to its Circumstances, nor shalt thou for these venial sins be put from the Supper in the blis

bliss of Heaven, but thou shalt want the tasting and the assaying of that delicate Supper, whilst thou livest here on Earth, unless thou be busie with all thy might to withstand and conquer such venial sins, for though it be so that venial sins breake not charity, yet soothly they let the fervour and the ghostly feeling of charity.

But thou wilt say againe, that thou canst not keep from hearing of Vanities, for diverse, both those that live in the World, and others, come oft to speak with thee, and tell thee some tales of vanity.

*How we  
should be-  
have our  
selves with  
them that  
come to  
speak with  
us.*

As unto this, I say thus, that thy communing with thy Neighbour is not much hurt to thee, but helpeth thee sometimes, if thou order thy businesse wisely; for that thou mayest try and find out thereby the measure of thy charity to thy Neighbour, whether it be much or little. Thou art bounden (as all other men and women are) to love thy Neighbour principally in thy heart, and also in Deeds to shew him tokens of Charity, as reason asketh, according to thy might and knowledge. And since it is so that thou oughtest not to goe out of thy house to seek occasion how thou mightest profit thy Neighbour by deeds of Charity, because thou art enclosed; Neverthelesse thou art bound to love all men in thy heart, and to shew some tokens of true love to them that come to thee; And therefore who so will speake with thee, whatsoever he be, or of what degree soever, though thou knowest not what he is, nor why he cometh, yet be thou soon ready with a good will to aske what his will is, be not dainty, nor suffer him long to waite for thee, but look how ready and how glad thou wouldst be if an Angell of Heaven should come and speake with thee, so ready and so buxome be thou in will for to speake with thy Neighbour when he cometh to thee, for thou knowest not what he is, nor why he cometh, nor what need he hath of thee, or thou of him, till thou hast tryed. And though thou be at prayer, or at thy devotions, that thou thinkest loth to break off, for that thou thinkest that thou oughtest not

not leave God for to speake with any one, I think not so in this case, for if thou be wise, thou shalt not leave God, but thou shalt find him, and have him, and see him, in thy Neighbour, as well, as in prayer, onely in another manner.

If thou canst love thy Neighbour well to speake with thy Neighbour with discretion shall be no hindrance to thee. Discretion shalt thou have on this manner as me thinketh: Who so cometh to thee, ask him meekly what he would have; and if he come to tell thee his disease or trouble, and to be comforted by thy speech, heare him gladly, and suffer him to say what he will, for ease of his own heart; And when he hath done, comfort him if thou canst, gladly, gently, and charitably, and soon break off. And then, after that, if he will fall into idle tales, or vanities of the World, or of other mens actions, answer him but little, and feed not his speech, and he will soon be weary, and quickly take his leave.

If it be another man that cometh to teach thee, as some Church-man, &c. hear him humbly, and with reverence to his order; and if his speeches comfort thee, aske of him more what thou needest, and take not upon thee to teach him, for it falleth not to thy share to teach a Priest, but in case of necessity. If his speech comfort thee or profit thee not, answer little, and he will soon take his leave.

If it be another man that cometh to give thee his Almes, or else for to heare thee speake, or to be taught by thee, speak gently and humbly to them all, reprove no man for his faults, for that belongeth not to thee, unless he be the more homely or familiar with thee, that thou knowest that he will take it well from thee. And to be short in this matter of thy telling of another of his faults, I say, that when thou concievest that it will doe him good, (namely in his Soul) thou mayest tell him thy minde, if thou hast opportunity, and if he is likely to take it well. And above all other things, in this matter of conversing with thy Neighbour, keep silence as much as thou canst, and then shalt



shalt thou see that by so doing thou shalt in short time be troubled with little press or company that would come to hinder thy devotions. This is my opinion herein ; doe thou better if thou canst,

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## CHAP. X.

*Of another hole or window that is to be stopped as well as the Windowes of the senses, viz. the Imagination.*

**B**UT thou wilt say, that thou hast done all this, viz. stopped the Windowes of thy five senses, so that thou seest no wordly things, nor hearest them, nor hast any use of thy senses, more then need requireth ; and for that end thou art enclosed. And to this I answer ; If thou doe thus, as I hope thou dost , then hast thou stopped a great Window of this Image, but yet art thou not secure ; for that thou hast not stopped the privie holes of the Imaginations of thy heart. For though thou seest me not with thy bodily eye, yet mayst thou see me at the same time in thy Soul by Imagination ; and so mayest thou do of all bodily things. If then thou feedest thy Soul willingly and wittingly by imaginations of vanities of the World, and desiring of worldly things ; as a comfort or pleasure and ease ; verily though thy Soul be kept within as to thy bodily senses, it is notwithstanding far without by such vain Imaginations.

But now thou wilt aske me whether it be any great sin for a Soul to busie it selfe in such vanities, either by the outward senses, or by the inward imaginations and thoughts. As unto this I say ; that I would never have thee aske any man this question : for he that will truly love God, he asketh not commonly, *whether this or that be the greater sin ?* for he will think that whatsoever letteth him from the love of God is a  
great

great sin, and will think nothing sin but that thing which is not good, and letteth him from the love of God. What is sin but a wanting or a forbearing of good? I say not that it will or ought to grieve him so much as a mortall sin would, or a venial sin should, neither say I but that he knoweth and distinguisheth a mortall sin from a venial, and fleeth it more then the other.

## CHAP. XI.

*A brief Rehearsall of what hath been said in the former Chapters, with a portraiture of this dark Image of sin.*

**B**y this that I have said mayest thou see a little the darkness of this Image of sin, not that I have described it fully to thee as it is, for I cannot; Nevertheless by this little thou mayest see more if thou look well.

But thou wilt say, how know you that I bear about me such an Image as you speak of? To which I answer, that I may take to me a word said by the Prophet, which is this; *Inveni Idolum mihi, I have found an Idoll in my selfe*, that is, a false Image, which some call an \* Idoll, very soule disfigured and mis-shapen with wretchednesse of all those sins which I have spoken of, by the which I am cast down into fleshly or sensuall pleasures and worldly vanities, from cleanness of heart, and feeling of spirituall vertues, more then I can or may say; and such fall of mine much grieveth me, and I cry God mercy for it. By this wretchednesse which I feel in my own selfe, more then I have said, may I the better tell thee of thy Image for we all came of *Adam and Eve*, cloathed with cloaths of *Beasts skins*, as the Scripture saith; *our Lord made to Adam and his wife cloathes of a Beasts hyde*. In token that by sin they were come to be mis-shapen like to a Beast, in which beastly cloathes we all are borne,

Joel. 12.  
\* *Amay-  
went.*

Gen. 3.

borne, and wrapped, and disfigured from our kindly shape.

The parts  
of this I-  
mage.

Eccles. 10.

Phil. 3.

Wisd. 2.

Matth. 5.

1 Cor. 6.

Prov. 6.

This then is an ugly Image to look upon ; Whose head is pride ; for pride is the first and principall sin, as the wise man saith. *The beginning of all manner of sin is pride.* The back and hinder part of it is *Covetousnesse*, as Saint Paul saith ; *I forget that which is behinde* (*viz* all worldly things) *and I stretch forward to that which is before.* The breast (in which is the heart) is *Envy* ; for it is no fleshly sin, but it is a Devils sin, as the wise man saith, *By envy of the Devill death came into the world*, for all thote that are of his party follow him therein. The Armes of it are *wrath*, in as much as a man wreaketh or revengeth himselfe by his Armes, contrary to Christs bidding in the Gospell ; *If a man smite thee upon one Check, thou shalt not smite him again, but offer him the other.* The belly of this Image is *Gluttony*, as Saint Paul saith, *Meat serveth for the Belly, and the Belly for Meat, but God shall destroy them both.* *Viz* at the last day, when shall be the full reforming of his chosen, and damning of the reprobate. The members of it are *Lechery*, of the which Saint Paul saith thus : *Yeeld not your members to be Instruments of iniquity unto sin* ; especially to this sin of *Lechery*. The feet of it are *Sloath* ; therefore the wise man saith to the slow and lazy person, (to stirr him up to do good deeds) *Run, make haste, raise thy friend*, that is to say, run quickly about to good workes, and make haste, for the time passeth and raise up thy friend, which is Jesus, by devout Prayer and Meditation. Here hast thou heard the members of this Image.

## CHAP. XII.

*A Comparing of this Image with the Image of Jesus,  
and how it is to be dealt with.*

**T**His is not the Image of Jesus, but it is liker an Image of the Devil, for the Image of Jesus is made of Vertues, with humility and perfect love and charity: but this is made of false fleshly love to thy selfe, with all those members, spoken of in the former Chapter, fastned thereto. This Image bearest thou, and every man whatsoever he be, untill by grace of Jesus it be somewhat destroyed and broken down. Thus David seemeth to say in the Psalter: *Man passeth away as an Image, and is troubled in vain*: Which is as if he had said, Though it be so that man in the beginning was made after the Image of God, stable and stedfast; Nevertheless because of sin he proceedeth farre in this Image of sin, living in this World, by the which he is unstable and troubled in vain. Also St. Paul speaketh of this Image thus: *As we have heretofore borne the Image of the earthly man the first Adam, that is, the Image of sin*: Right so now (if we will come to the love God) *let us beare the Image of the heavenly man Jesus, which is the Image of Vertues*. Psal. 38.

What shalt thou then doe with this Image? I answer thee by a word that the Jewes said to Pilate of Christ, *Crucifie him*. Take thou this body of sin, and do him on the Crosse; that is to say, break down this Image, and slay the false love of sin in thy selfe; as Christs body was slain for our sins and trespasses, Right so it behooveth thee, if thou wilt be like Christ. slay thy bodily liking and fleshly lustes in thy selfe. Thus said St. Paul; *Those that are Christs followers have crucified and slain their flesh (that is the Image of sin) with all the lustes, and the unreasonable desires*. I Cor. 15.

*This Image  
is to be crucified.*

*Gal. 5.*



*And to be broken down.* desires and appetites of it. Slay then and break down Pride, and set up Humility; Also break down Anger and Envy, and raise up Love and Charity to thy Neighbour. Also instead of Covetousnesse, poverty of Spirit, instead of Sloth, servour in devotion, with chearfull readinesse to all good deeds. And instead of Gluttony and Lechery, Sobriety and Chastity in Body and Soul. This considered St. Paul, when he

Ephes. 4.

*And how.  
1. by the  
help of Je-  
sus,*

*2. By keep-  
ing our  
hearts.*

Prov. 4.

*How we  
may know  
our heart  
and affecti-  
ons.*

said thus: *Putting off the old man with all his members, which is rotten according to the desires of error, yee shall shape you and cloath you in the new man, which is the Image of God by holynesse and righteousnesse, and perfection of Vertues.* Who shall help thee to break down this Image; Verily thy Lord Jesus. In the vertue and in the name of him shalt thou break down this Mawment (or Idoll) of sin, pray to him earnestly, and desire it, and he shall help thee.

Gather then thy heart together, and do after the counsell of the wise man, when he saith thus: *With all diligence keep thine heart, for out of it cometh life, and that is when it is well kept; for then wise thoughts, cleane affections and burning desires of vertues and of charity, and of the blis of Heaven come out of it, making the Soul to live a blessed life.* But on the contrary, if it be not kept, then as our Lord saith in the Gospel, *evill thoughts and uncleane affections come out of the heart which defile the man.* They either benum and kill the life of the Soul by mortall sin, or else they enfeeble the Soul and make it sick, if they be venial. For what is a man but his thoughts and his loves? These alone make a man good or bad. So much as thou lovest God and thy Neighbour, and knowest him, so much is thy Soul, and if thou love him little, little is thy Soul, and if thou love him not at all, nothing at all is thy Soul. It is nothing as to good, but it is much as to sin. And if thou wilt know what thou lovest, look and observe what thou thinkest upon most; for where our love is, there is our eye; and where our liking is, upon that our heart is thinking most. If thou love God much, thou likest to think

think much upon him, and if thou love him little, then little dost thou think upon him. Rule well thy thoughts and thine affections, and then art thou vertuous.

Undertake then the breaking down of this Image, when thou hast first well berthought thee of thy selfe, and of thy wretchednesse, inwardly, as I have said, how proud, how vain, how envious, how melancholy (or froward) how covetous, how fleshly, and how full of corruption: Also how little knowing, feeling or savour thou hast of God and of spirituall things, how wise, how quick, and how much savour thou hast in earthly things: And (that I may say all in one word) how thou art as full of sin, as an hide or skin is full of flesh, yet be not thou too much dejected, though thou thinkest thus of thy self. And when thou hast done thus, lift up then the desire of thy heart to thy Lord Jesus, and pray for his help, cry to him with great desires and sighings, that he will help thee to beare this great burthen of this Image, or else that he will break it: Think also what a shame it is for thee to be fed with Swines meat of fleshly Savours, that oughtest to feel a spirituall Savour of Heavenly joy.

If thou dost thus, then beginnest thou to rise against the whole ground of sin in thee, as I have said. And it may be that thou shalt feel pain & sorrow, for thou must know, that no soul can live without pain, heaviness and sadness, unless that she take delight or have her rest either in her Creator or in some creature. And therefore when thou risest against thy selfe by a fervent desire for to attain to the feeling of thy Lord Iesus within thee, and for to draw away thy love from all bodily things, & from rest in all bodily feelings, in so much that thou art even a burthen to thy self, and it seems to thee that all creatures are risen up against thee, and all the things, which heretofore thou tookest delight in, do now turn thee to pain, and heaviness. And when thou hast thus forsaken thy selfe and canst not likely, for all that, as yet find comfort in God, needs must thy Soule feeble and suffer paine in this case.

*This breaking will be painfull at first.*

Nevertheless I hope, that he that will suffer this pain awhile, steadfastly, cleaving to the desire and naked minde after Jesus Christ, and to that his desire, that he will have nothing but his Lord, and will not lightly depart there from, nor seek any other comfort from without for a time, (for it lasteth not long) our Lord is nigh to him, and soon shall ease his heart, for he will help him to bear his body or sensuality, which is full of Corruption; and will, with his mercifull power of his gracious presence, break down this false Image of love in him; Not all at once, but by little and little, till he be in some measure reformed to his likenesse.

*But afterwards more easie.*

*The means to facilitate it.*

Es. 3.

After such a totall rising and resolution made by thee against thy selfe, when it is passed, thou shalt more soberly, more gently, and more easily rule thy selfe, and more charily keep and guard thy thoughts and thine affections, and shalt note and discern them, whether they be good or bad. And thereupon, if afterwards thou feel, (I put this for an example) a stirring of pride in any manner or spice of it, be then presently well aware, as well and as soon as thou canst, and suffer it not to escape away lightly, but take it in mind, and there rent it, break it, and despise it, and doe all the shame thou canst unto it; look thou spare it not, nor believe it, though it speak never so faire, for it is false, though it seem to be truth; as the Prophet saith: *My people. they who call thee blessed do deceive thee* (by their so saying) *and would bring thee into error.*

And if thou be diligent to do thus, thou shalt, by the grace of Jesus, within short time, stop much of the spring of Pride and much abate the vain delight thereof, so that thou shalt very early feel any such motion in thee? And when thou seelest it, it shall be so weak and as it were half dead, that it shall not much trouble thee. And then shalt thou have a spirituall fight of the vertue of humility, and see how good, and how faire it is, and thou shalt desire it, and love it for its goodnesse; so that it shall please thee both to behold  
and



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and see thy selfe, as thou art indeed, and also to be esteemed and held by others to be such a one, that is full of corruption, and (if need be) to suffer gladly despite and reproof for love of righteousness.

In like manner when thou feelest any stirrings of wrath, or Anger, or of Melancholique risings of heart, or any other evill will against thy Neighbour, for any manner of cause, though it seem reasonable, and not to be against charity, beware of it, and be ready with thy thought to restraints it, that it turn not into a further liking or consent; resist it as much as thou canst and follow it not neither by word nor deed; but as it riseth, smite it down againe, and so shalt thou slay it with the sword of the feare of God, that it shall not trouble thee; for know well in all these stirrings of pride, vain glory, envy, or any other, that as soon as thou percieveest it, and resistest it with displeasure of thy will, and of thy reason, thou slayest it. Though it be so, that it cleave still upon thy heart against thy will, and will not lightly passe away, fear it not, for though it letteth thy Soul from peace, yet doth it not defile her.

Right so in like manner shalt thou doe against all evill stirrings of Covetousnesse, Sloth, Gluttony, and Lechery: that thou be allwayes ready with thy reason and thy will, to reprove them and despise them.

And this mayest thou doe the better, and the more readily, if thou be diligent and carefull to set thy heart most upon one thing, and that is nought else but a spirituall desire after God, how to please him, love him and know him, to see him, and to enjoy him by grace here in a little feeling, and in the blisse of Heaven in a full being. This desire if thou keep it, it will tell thee what is sin, and what is not; and what thing is good and what better; and if thou wilt but fasten thy thoughts to the same desire, it shall teach thee all that thou needest, and it shall procure thee all that thou wantest: And therefore whensoever thou risest against the ground of sin in generall, or against the ground of any particular sin, hang fast upon this de-

*An excellent way to facilitate it, is to set our desire upon God.*



fire, and set the point of thy thoughts more upon God whom thou desirest, then upon the sin which thou abhorrest. And if thou do so, then God fighteth for thee, and will destroy sin in thee. And thou shalt much sooner come to thy purpose, if thou doest thus, then if thou shouldest leave thy humble desire principally after God, and set thy heart only against the stirrings of sin, as though thou wouldest destroy it by thy own mastering of it, but thou shalt never so bring it about.

## C H A P. XIII.

*How a man shall be shapen to the Image of Jesus, and Jesus shapen in him.*

Gal. 5.

**D**Oe as I have said, and better if thou canst, and I hope by the grace of Jesus thou shalt make the Devill ashamed, and shalt break down all such wicked stirrings, that they shall not much trouble thee. And by this course may the Image of sin be broken down in thee and destroyed, by the which thou art misshapen from the kindly shape of Christs Image; and thou shalt be reformed and shapen again to the Image of the humanity of Jesus, by humility and charity, and afterward shalt thou become full shapen to the Image it selfe of the Godhead, whilst thou livest here, as it were in a shadow of it in Contemplation, and hereafter in verity and full realty in the blisse of Heaven.

Of this shaping to the likenesse of Christ St. Paul speaks thus; *My little Children whom I travaile with again* (as a woman that were with child with you) *untill Christ be shapen again in you.* Thou hast concieved Christ within thee by faith, and he liveth in thy Soul by grace, in as much as thou hast a good will and a desire to serve him, and please him; but he is not yet fully shapen in thee, nor thou in him by perfection of Charity: And therefore St. Paul bare thee and me and others also with travaile, as a woman beareth a child, untill

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till the time that Christ hath his full shape in us, and we in him; Of this treateth the second Book.

## CHAP. XIV.

*The Conclusion of this Book, and of the Cause why it was made, and how shew for whom it was made, was to make use of it.*

Who so thinketh to attain to the working, and to the full use of contemplation and not by this way, that is by perfection of Vertues, and taking full heed there- to, cometh not in by the dore, and therefore as a thief he shall be cast out, I say not but that a man may have by the gift of God, at by times, a tasting and a glimmering of the contemplative life; some I say at the beginning of their Conversion: But the sollid feeling of it shall he not have, untill he have gotten in him some perfection of Vertues. For Christ is the dore, and is also the Porter, and without his leave and his liberty, no man may come in; as he himself saith: *No man cometh to the Father but by me.* That is to say, *Joh. 4.* no man can come to the Contemplation of the God-head but he that is first reformed, by perfection of Humility and Charity, to the likenesse of Jesus in his Humanity.

Lo then have I told thee a little as me thinketh first of Contemplative life, what it is: and then of the wayes which by the grace of God leade thereunto. Not as if I had it my selfe in feeling and in working, as I have it in talking. Nevertheless I would by this writing of mine (such as it is) first stirr up my own Negligence, to doe better then I have done: and also my purpose is, to stirr thee or any other man or woman that hath taken the state of life Contemplative, to tra-vaile more diligently and more humbly in that manner of life, by such simple words as God hath given me grace for to say. And therefore if there be any

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word therein that stirreth thee or comforteth thee more to the love of God, thank God, for it is his gift, and not of the words written. And if it comfort thee not, or thou understandest it not readily, study not too long about it, but lay it aside till another time, and go to thy prayers, or some other businesse: Take it as it will come, and not all at once.

Also these words which I write, take them not too strictly, but where thou thinkest, upon good consideration, that I write too short, either for lack of english, or lack of reason, I pray thee amend it, onely where need is. Also these words which I write to thee, be long not all of them to one that is of an active life, but to thee or to any other which hath the state of life contemplative.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with thee.

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THE



# THE SECOND BOOK,

## CHAP. I.

### SECT. I.

*That a man is the Image of God after the Soul and not after the Body; and how he is restored and reformed thereto that was mis-shapen by sin.*



INASMUCH as thou desirest greatly, and askest it for charity, to heare more of that Image of which I have spoken in the former Book in part: therefore I shall willingly, with fear fall to thy desire, and by the help of our Lords grace, in whom I fully trust, shall open to thee a little more of this Image.

I tell thee in truth, that I understand nought else thereby, but thy Soul. For thy Soul and my Soul and every rational soul is an Image, and that a worthy one, for it is the Image of God, as the Scripture saith: *Man is Gods Image and made to the Image and likenesse of him; not in his bodily shape without, but in his faculties within, as holy Writ saith: Our Lord God shaped man in his Soul to his own image and likenesse.* This is the Image that I have spoken of. This Image, made after the Image of God in its first shaping, was wonderfull faire and bright, full of burning

Gen. 2.



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\* *Fleimid.*

*Man restored by the passion of Christ.*

\* *Unworship.*

ing love and ghostly light, but through the sin of the first man *Adam*, it was disfigured and mishapen into another likeness, as I have said before, for it fell from that ghostly light & that heavenly feeding into painful darkness, and lust of this wretched life, exiled and\* driven out from the inheritance of heaven, that it should have had, if it had continued, into the wretchedness of this earth, and afterward into the prison of hell, there to have been without end: from which prison it should never return to the heavenly inheritance until it were reformed to the first shape and likeness. But that reforming could not be made by any earthly man, for every man was in the same mischief, and none was sufficient to help himself, and so much less another man. Therefore it needed to be done by him that was more than man, that is God alone. And it was needful that he should reform and restore man to blisse (if ever he were to be saved) who of his infinite goodness first created him thereto. Now then, I shall tell thee, how he might be reformed, and how he is reformed to his first likeness by him that first made and framed him, for that is the intent of this writing. The justice of God requireth that a sin committed be not forgiven, unless that amends be made for it, if it may be done; Now it is certain, that mankind that was perfect in *Adam*, the first man (sinning so grievously against God, when he broke his special command, & assented to the false counsell of the Devill) deserved justly to be separated from him, and damned to hell without end, so far forth, that according to Gods justice, he could not be forgiven, unless amends were first made, and full satisfaction given; But this amends could none make that was man only, and proceeded out of *Adam* by generation; because that the trespass and \* dishonour done to God was endless great, and therefore it passed mans power to make amends for it. And 2ly, because he that had offended, and would make amends for it, ought to give and pay unto him whom he had offended, all that he owed him, though he had not offended, and over and besides that, to give and pay him something that he owed

owed not, in regard of the same offence and injury done: But mankind had not wherewith to pay God for his trespass, over and above that which he owed him, for what good soever man could do in body or soul, was but his debt: for every man ought, as the Gospell saith, *For to love God with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his might;* and better then this could he not do; and nevertheless this deed was not sufficient to the reforming of mankind, nor could he do this, untill he was first reformed. Then needed it, that if mans soul should be reformed, and the trespass made good, that our Lord God himself should reform this Image, and make amends for the trespass, since no man could. But that might he not do in his Godhead, for he might not nor ought not to make amends by suffering pain in his own nature, therefore it was necessary, that he should take the same nature that had trespassed, and so become man. And that could he not do by the common way of generation; for it was impossible for Gods Son to be born of touched woman, therefore must he become man, through a gracious generation by the working of the holy Ghost of a pure gracious Virgin our Lady St. Mary; and so it was done: for our Lord Iesus, Gods son, became man; and through his pretious death which he suffered, made amends to the Father of Heaven for mans guilt. And that could he well do, for he was God, and ought not any thing for himself but only as he was man, born of the same kind that Adam was that first trespassed, and so though he ought it not for his own person, for that he had not sinned, Nevertheless he ought it of his free will, for the trespass of mankind, having taken upon him their nature for the salvation of man, out of his endlesse mercy.

For sooth it is, there was never any man that could yield to God any thing of his own which he owed not, but only this blessed Iesus: for he could pay God something which he owed not, for himselfe, which was but one thing, *viz.* to give his pretious life by voluntary undertaking death for love of justice, this he owed not. As much good indeed as hee was able

to do in this life for the honour of God, was all but due debt: but to undergoe death for the love of Justice, he was not bound thereto. He was bound to Justice, but he was not bound to dye: for death is onely a pain ordained to man for his own sin. But our Lord Jesus Christ never sinned, neither could sin, and therefore he ought not to dye. Since then he ought not to dye, and yet dyed willingly, therefore payd he to God more then he ought. And since that was the best mans deed, and most worthy that ever was done, therefore was it reasonable that the sin of mankinde should be forgiven. In as much as mankinde had found a man of the same kinde, without

\* *Wemme.*

\* spot of sin, that is Jesus; that might make amends for the trespasss done, and might pay our Lord God all that he ought; and over and above, that which he ought not. Since then that our Lord Jesus God and man dyed thus for the salvation of mans Soul, it was just that sin should be forgiven, and mans soul, that was his Image, should or might be reformed and restored to the first likenesse, and to the blis of Heaven.

This passion of our Lord, and this precious death is the ground of all the reforming of mans Soul; without which mans Soul could never be reformed to the likenesse of him, nor come to the blisse of Heaven: but blessed be he for all these his workes. Now so it is, that through the vertue of his pretious passion, the flaming Sword of the Cherubin, that drove *Adam* out of Paradise, is now put away; and the endless Gates of Heaven are open to every man that will enter in thereto. For the person of Jesus is both God and King of Heaven in the blis of the Father; and as man, he is Porter at the Gate, ready to receive every Soul that will be reformed here in this life to his likeness. For now may every Soul, if he will be reformed to the likenesse of God: Since that the trespasss is forgiven, and the amends through Jesus is made for the first guilt: Nevertheless though this be true, yet all Souls have not the profit nor the fruit of this pretious passion nor are reformed to the likeness of him.

SECT.



## SECT. II.

*That Jewes and Pagans, and also false Christians, are not reformed effectually through the vertue of the passion, through their own faults.*

**T**WO manner of men are not reformed by the vertue of this passion; one is of them that know it not: Another is of them that love it not. Jewes and Pagans have not the benefit, because they know it not. Jewes understand not that Jesus the Son of the Virgin Mary is Gods Son. Also the Pagans know it not that the Sovereign wisdom of God would become the Son of man, and in his Man-hood would suffer the paines of death. And therefore the Jewes held the preaching of the Crosse and of the Passion nought but slander and blasphemy; and the Pagans held it nought but fancye and folly. But true Christians hold it the Sovereign wisdom of God, and his mighty power. Thus saith Saint Paul: *We preach unto you Christ crucified, to the Jewes a stumbling block, and to the Gentiles foolishnesse: but to those that be called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God and the wisdom of God.* And therefore these men, through their unbelief, put themselves from the reforming of their own Soules, and continuing in this unbelief, shall never be saved nor come to the blisse of Heaven. For sooth it is, from the beginning of the World to the last ending was there never any man saved, nor shall be, unlesse he believe generally or specially in Jesus Christ to come or already come. For right as all chosen Soules, that were before the Incarnation under the old Testament, believed in Christ that he should come; to reform mens Souls; and that either with an open and cleare belief, as the Patriarks and Prophets and other Holy men did; or else with a Secret and generall Beliefe, as Children and other simple and imperfect

I Cor. I.



*The Scale of Perfection.*

imperfect Souls had, that had no speciall or explicite clear knowledge of the Myltery, of the Incarnation : Right so, all chosen Souls under the new Testament, have belief in Christ already come ; either openly and feelingly, as spirituall men and wise men have, or else generally, as children have that are christned, and other simple and unlearned Souls have, that are nourished in the bosome of holy Church,

Since this is so, me thinks that those men erre greatly and grievously, who say that Jewes and Turks by keeping of their own Law may be saved, though they believe not in Jesus Christ, as holy Church believeth : in as much as they believe that their own faith is good, and secure, and sufficient for their Salvation : And in that beliete they do as it seems many good deeds of Justice and righteousness, and peradventure if they knew that the Christian faith were better then their own, they would leave their own & take it ; and therefore they shall be saved. But I say this is not enough, for Christ, God and Man is both the way and the end ; And he is the mediatur betwixt God and Man, and without him can no Soul be reconciled, nor come to the blis of Heaven ; and therefore they that believe not in him who is both God and Man, can never be saved nor come to blis.

Other men also, that love not Christ nor his Passion, are not reformed in their soules to his likenesse, and these are false Christians which are out of Grace and Charity, and live and dye in deadly sin. These men know well as it seemeth, that Jesus is Gods Son, and that his passion sufficeth to the salvation of mans soul ; and they believe also the other Articles of faith ; But it is an unshapen and dead faith, for they love him not, nor choose the fruit of his Passion, but lye still in their sins, and in the false love of this World, unto their last end ; and so they be not reformed to the likenesse of God, but goe to the paines of Hell endlessly, as Jewes and Turks doe, and into much more and greater paines then they, inasmuch as they

they had the truth and kept it not ; for that makes their sin greater then if they had never known it.

If then thou wilt know what soules are reformed here in this life to the image of God through the vertue of his passion ; Verily onely those that believe in him and love him ; in which soules, the Image of God that was mishapen through sin, as it were into a soule beasts likenesse, is restored and reformed to its first shape, and to the worthinesse and worship that it had in the beginning ; without which restoring and reforming , never shall any soule be saved nor come to blifs.

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## CHAP. II.

*Of two manners of reforming of this Image, one in fulnesse, another in part.*

**N**OW thou wilt say, how can this be, That the Image of God which is mans soule, should be reformed here in this life to his likenesse in any creature ? Whereas the contrary seemeth true, nay it seems that it cannot possibly be so ? For if it were reformed, then should it have a stable memory, a cleare sight or understanding, a cleare burning love to God and spirituall things everlastingly, as it had in the beginning : But these hath no creature living here in this life, as thou perceivest ; for as for thy selfe, thou canst truly say, that thou art far from it : Thy memory, thy reason, and thy love of thy soule, are so much set upon the beholding and loving of earthly things, that of spirituall things thou seelest right little : Thou seelest no reforming in thy selfe, but art so wrapped about with this black image of sin, for all that thou canst do, that upon what side soever thou turnest, thou seelest thy selfe defiled and spotted with fleshly stirrings of this soule Image ; and other changings thou seelest none, fresh fleshlinesse into spiritualnesse, neither in  
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the inward faculties of thy soule within, nor in bodily feelings or thy senses without: Wherefore it seems to thee, that it cannot be that this Image should be so reformed.

Thou askest therefore how it can be reformed?

To this Answer and say thus; There be two manners of reforming of the Image of God which is mans soule, whereof one is in fulnesse, another is in part; reforming in fulnesse cannot be had in this life, but is deferred till after, to the blisse of heaven, where mans soule shall fully be reformed; not to that state that it had at the first by nature, or might have had through grace if it had stood whole; but it shall be restored to much more blisse, and much higher joy through the great mercy and the endlesse goodnesse of God, then it should have had if it had never fallen: For then shall the soule receive the whole and the full feeling of God in all its faculties, without any other love or affection to anything else interposing it selfe. And it shall see man kinde in the person of Jesus exalted above the kinde or nature of Angels, united to the God-head, for then shall Jesus both God and Man be all in all, and onely he, and none other but he, as the Prophet saith; *Our Lord (Jesus) in that day shall be exalted onely.* And also the body of man shall then be glorified, for it shall receive fully the rich dowry of \*immortality, with all that belongeth thereto. This shall a soul have with the body, and much more then I can say: but that shall be the blisse of heaven, but not in this life: For though it be so that the passion of our Lord be the cause of all this full reforming of mans soule, Nevertheless it was not his will to grant it straitways after passion, to all chosen soules that were living at the time of his passion; but he delayed it unto the last day, and that for this reason: Manifest it is that our Lord Jesus Christ of his mercy hath ordained a certaine number of soules to salvation, which number was not fulfilled in the time of his passion, and therefore it needed that by length of time through naturall generation of men that number should be made up; then

Isa. 2.

\* Undead-  
lines.

then if it had so been, that so soone as after the death of our Lord, every soule that would have believed in him should have beene blessed and fully reformed by his life, without any further delay, there would no creature that lived then have beene, that would not have received the Faith for to have been made blessed, and then should generation have ceased; And so should we that are now chosen soules living, and other soules that come after us, not have beene borne, and so should our Lord have failed of his number: But that might not be, and therefore our Lord provided much better for us, in that he delayed the full reforming of mans soule till the last end, as St. Paul saith; *God providing better for us, that they should not be consummate without us.* That is, our Lord providing better for us in the delaying of our reforming, then if he had granted it then, for this reason, that the chosen soules should not make a full end without us that come after. Heb. 10.

Another reason is this: Since that man in his first Creation was set in his free will, and had free choise whether he would have God fully or no, it was therefore reasonable, that since he would not choose God then, but wretchedly fell from him, if he should afterward be reformed, that he should be set againe in the same free choosing that hee was first in, as whether he would become reformed or no; And this may be also a cause why mans soule was not fully reformed speedily upon the passion of Jesus Christ.

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## CHAP. III.

*That reforming in part is in two manners, One in Faith; Another in Feeling.*

**A** Nother reforming of this Image is in part, and this may be had in this life; and if it be not had



had in this life, it will never be had, nor the soule ever come to be saved.

But this reforming is on two manners; One is in *Faith* onely, another is in *Faith* and in *Feeling*. The first sufficeth to salvation, the second is worthy to have passing great reward in the blisse of Heaven. The first may be had easily and in short time, the second not so, but through length of time, and much spiritual paines. The first may be had, and yet the man may have together with it the stirrings and feelings of the Image of sin: For though a man feele nothing in himselfe but all stirrings of sinne and fleshly desires, notwithstanding those feelings, if he doe not voluntarily assent thereto, he may be and remaine reformed in *Faith* to the likenesse of God.

But the second putteth out the liking in, & delight felt in sensuall motions and worldly desires, and suffereth no such spots to abide in this Image. The first is onely of beginning and profiting soules, and of Active men: The second is of perfect soules, and of Contemplative men. For by the first reforming, the image of sinne is not destroyed, but it is left as it were all whole in feeling; But the second destroyeth the old feelings of this image of sinne, and bringeth into the soule new gracious feelings, through the workings of the Holy Ghost. The first is good, the second is better; but the third, that is in the blisse of Heaven, is best of all. First let us speak of that one, and then of that other, and so we shall come to the third.

CHAP. IV.

*That through the Sacrament of Baptism (which is grounded in the passion of Christ) this image is reformed from Original sin.*

**T**WO manner of finnes make the soule to loose the Image and likenesse of God. The one is called Original, that is the first sin; The other is Actually, that is committed by our own will, these two sins put away a soule from the blisse of heaven, and damne it to the endlesse paines of hell, unlesse through the grace of God it be reformed to his likenesse, before it passe hence out of this life. Neverthelesse two remedies are there against these two finnes, by the which a mishapen soul may be restored againe; One is the Sacrament of Baptisme against originall sin, another is the sacrament of penance against Actual sin. A soule of a childe that is borne, and is not christned, by reason of Original sinne, hath no likenesse of God, he is nought but an image of the Fiend, and a brand of Hell; but as soon as it is christned, it is reformed to the Image of God, and through the vertue of the faith of *Holy Church* is suddenly turned from the likeness of the Fiend, and made like an Angel of Heaven. Also the same falleth to a Jew or to a Turk, the which before they be christned, are nought but \* bondslaves of Hell; but when they forsake their errour, and fall humbly to the truth in Christ, and receive the Baptisme of water in the Holy Ghost, surely without any further tarrying, they are reformed to the likeness of God, so fully, that the *Holy Church* believeth, that if presently after Baptisme they should happen to dye, they should streight flye up to heaven without any more letting, though they had before in the time of their unbelieve committed never so

\* *Manciple.*

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many or so great sins; nor should they ever seele the paines of Heell nor of Purgatory, and that priviledge should they have by the merit of Christs passion.

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C H A P. V.

*That through the sacrament of penance (that consisteth in Contrition, Confession and Satisfaction) this Image is reformed from Actuell sin.*

**M**oreover Christian men or women that have lost the likenesse of God through a deadly sinne in breaking Gods Commandements, if he through the touching of grace in his heart doth truly forsake his sinne, with sorrow and contrition of heart, and be in full purpose to amend and turne to a good life: And in this foresaid purpose and will receiveth the sacrament of penance, if he may come by it, or if he cannot have a will and desire to come by it, surely I say, that this man or womans soule, that was before mishapen to the likenesse of the Devil through deadly sinne, is now by the sacrament of penance, restored and shapen again to the Image of our Lord God.

This is a great courtesie of our Lord, and an endlesse mercy, who so lightly forgiveth all manner of sinne, and so suddenly giveth plenty of grace to a sinful soule that asketh mercy of him. He requireth not great doing of penance, nor painful suffering in the flesh, before he forgiveth it; But he requireth a loathing of sinne, and a full forsaking in the will for love of him, and a turning of the heart to him; This he asketh, for this he giveth. And then when he seeth this, without any further delay he forgiveth the sin, and reformeth the soule to his likenesse. The sin is forgiven, that the soule shall not be damned, nevertheless the paine due to the sin is not yet fully forgiven, unlesse that the contrition and love be the greater. And therefore shall he goe and shew himself, and make his confession to his ghostly Father, and  
receive

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receive the penance which he enjoyneth him for his trespasse, and performe it gladly, so that both the sin and the punishment may be done away before he passe hence.

And this is the wise Ordinance of *Holy Church*, to the great benefit of mans soule, that though the sin be forgiven through the vertue of Contrition, nevertheless for the exercise of Humility, and for to make entire satisfaction, he shal (if he have means for it) shew to his Priest a plenary confession; for that is his token and warrant against all his enemies, of the forgiveness of his sinnes: and such a token or warrant will it be needfull for him to have. Just as if a man had forfeited his life against a King on earth, it were not enough for him (as to his full security and discharge) to have onely forgiveness of the King, unlesse he have a charter from him, which may be his token and warrant against all other men. Right so may it be said spiritually, if a man through deadly sinne have forfeited his life against the King of Heaven, it is not enough for him (as to his full security) to have forgiveness of God onely by Contrition between God and him, unlesse he have a charter also made by *Holy Church* (if he may come by it) and this is the sacrament of penance, which is his charter and token of forgiveness. For sith it was so, that he had offended and forfeited both against God and his *Church*, it is skilfull that he have forgiveness from that one, and a warrant from that other. And this is one cause why Confession is needful.

Another reason is this; That since this reforming of a soule standeth in faith onely, and not in feeling (for the forgiveness is onely believed and not felt) therefore a fleshly or sensuall man, that is at first gross and rude in understanding, and cannot easily judge and conceive, but onely outward bodily things, would not easily have believed that his sinnes had been forgiven him, if he had not received some outward or bodily token of it, and that is Confession, through the which token he is made secure of forgiveness if



he do his part and duty in the businesse. This is the beliefe of holy Church, as I understand it. Another reason is this, Though the ground of forgiveness stand not principally in Confession, but in Contrition of the heart, and in detestation or forethinking of sin: Nevertheless I believe, that there is many a soul that would never have felt true Contrition, nor had arrived at forsaking of sin, if Confession had not been, for it falleth out oiten times, that in the time of Confession, grace of compunction cometh to a soul that before never felt grace, but ever was colde and dry, and farther off from feeling of grace: And therefore sith confession was so profitable to the more party of Christian men, holy Church ordained, for the more security generally to all Christian men that every man and woman should once in the yeare at the least confesse all their sins to their ghostly Father, that come to their mind, though they had never so much contrition before time. Nevertheless I hope well, that if all men had been as carefull about the keeping of themselves and eschewing of all manner of sin; and had arrived at as great knowledge and feeling of God as some men have; holy Church would not have ordained the said token of Confession as an Obligation, for it had not been needfull. But because all men are not so perfect, and peradventure much or the greater part of Christians are imperfect, therefore holy Church ordained Confession by way of generall Obligation, to all Christians that will acknowledge holy Church as their mother, and will be obedient to her Lawes.

If this be true, as I hope it is, then erreth he greatly, that generally saith that Confession of sins to the Priest is neither necessary nor profitable, and that no man is bound thereto: for by that which I have said, it is both necessary and profitable to all those soules who in this wretched life are defiled with sin, and namely to those who through deadly sin are misshapen from the likenesse of God, who cannot be reformed to his likenesse but by the Sacrament of penance

nance, which principally standeth in contrition and sorrow of heart, and secondarily in Confession of mouth following after it, if it may be had. And thus through this Sacrament of Penance is a sinfull soule reformed to the Image and likeness of God.

But this reforming standeth in Faith and not in Feeling. For right as Faiths property is to believe that which thou seest not, so also is it to believe that which thou feelest not: For he that is reformed in his soule by the Sacrament of Penance to the Image of God, feeleth not any change in himselfe, neither in his externall corporall nature, nor within in the substance of his soule, other then he did before; For as to his feeling he is as he was, and feeleth the same stirrings of sinne, and the same corruption of his flesh in his passions and worldly risings in his heart, as he did before: Yet he ought to believe, that through grace he is reformed to the Image of God, though he neither seele it nor see it. He may easily seele in himselfe a sorrow for his finnes, and a turning of his will from sinne to cleanness of living, if he have grace, and take good heed of himselfe; But he can neither see nor seele the reforming of his soule, how it is wonderfully and unperceivably changed from the foulness of the Fiend unto the fairness of an Angell, through a secret gracious working of the holy Ghost. This cannot he see, but onely believe it; and if he believe it, then is his soule reformed in truth. For right as *Holy Church* believeth, a *Jew* or *Saracen*, or a child, by the Sacrament of Baptisme duly administred, to be reformed in soule to the Image of God, through a secret unperceivable working of the holy Ghost, notwithstanding all the fleshly stirrings of his body of sin, which he feeleth, after his Baptisme as well as before: Right so, by the sacrament of penance humbly & truly received, a bad Christian, who hath been encombred with deadly sin all his life time, is reformed within

in his soule, unperceivably, saving that he finds a turning of his will to God through a secret power, and a gracious working of the Holy Ghost, which suddenly worketh, and in a moment or the twinkling of an eye setteth right a froward soule, and turneth it from a spiritual foulness to an invisible fairnesse, and maketh her, of a servant of the Fiend, a son of joy; and of a prisoner of Hell, an inheritor of Heaven, notwithstanding all the fleshly feelings of this sinful image, that is the corporal nature.

*The sacraments of Baptisme and of penance do not utterly destroy and take away the motions of the flesh.*

For thou must know, that the Sacrament of Baptisme or of penance, is not of that vertue to hinder and destroy utterly all the stirrings of fleshly lusts and of inordinate passions, that the soule should never feelee any risings nor stirrings of them at any time; for if it were so, then were a soule fully reformed here to the dignity it had at its first creation;

But that cannot be fully in this life; But it is of that vertue, that it cleanseth the soule from all sins before done; and if she, being in that case, chance to dye, it saveth her from damnation; or if it continue in the body, it giveth her grace to withstand the stirrings of sin, or of the passions of the flesh, so that be they never so grievous, they shall not hurt her, nor separate her from God, as long as she doth not willingly consent thereto. So meant St. Paul when he said thus;

Rom. 8.

*There is no condemnation to them that walke not after the flesh: That is, those soules that are reformed to the image of God by faith, through the Sacrament of Baptisme or of penance, shall not be damned for the feelings of this image of sin, if so be that they go not after the motions of sensuality by deed doing.*

CHAP. VI.

*That we are to believe stedfastly the reforming of this Image, if our Conscience witnesse to us a full forsaking of sinne, and a true turning of our will to good living.*

OF this reforming in faith speaketh St. Paul in these words, *The just man liveth by faith*: That is, Heb. 10. he that is made righteous by Baptisme or penance, he liveth by faith, which sufficeth to salvation, and also to heavenly peace, as St. Paul saith; *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God*; That is, we that are made righteous and reformed through faith in Christ, have peace and accord made betwixt God and us, notwithstanding the vicious motions of our body of sinne; For though this reforming be secret, and cannot well be felt here in this life, neverthelesse who so stedfastly believeth it, and is careful to shape his life accordingly, and turnes not againe to deadly sinne, surely when the houre of Death cometh, and the soule is departed, then shall he finde that true which I say now. St. John in comfort of chosen souls that live here in faith under the feeling of this painfull image, saith thus; *Little children, now are we the sons of God, and it appeareth not what we shall be; but we know that when Christ shall appeare, we shall also appeare like him in glory.* 1 John 5. That is, we are now whilst we live here the sons of God, for we are reformed by Faith in Christ to his likenesse, but it appeareth not plainly what we are, but it is kept secret: Neverthelesse we know well, that when our Lord shall appear at the last day, then shall we appeare with him like to him in glory.

If then thou wouldst know if thy soule be reformed to the Image of God or no, thou mayest be resolved *How a man may finde out whether his soule be reformed.*



by that which I have said, ransack thy conscience, and looke what thy will is, for therein consisteth the whole businesse : If it be turned from all manner of deadly sinne, so that thou wouldst not for all the world wittingly and wilfully break the Commandements of God ; And for what thou hast done amisse heretofore contrary to his bidding, hast humbly made thy Confession, with full intent to leaue it, and art sorry that thou didst it ; I say then surely that thy soul is reformed in faith to the likenesse of God.

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C H A P. VII.

*That all the soules that live humbly in the faith of holy Church, and have their faith inlivened with love and charity, be reformed by this Sacrament, though it be so that they cannot feele the speciall gift of devotion or of spirituall feeling.*

**I**N this reforming, which is onely in faith, the most part of chosen soules lead their lives, setting their wills stedfastly to flee all manner of deadly sinnes, and keeping themselves in love and charity to their neighbour, and keeping the Commandements of God according to their knowledge : And when it is so that wicked stirrings and evill desires of pride, envy, wrath, or luxury, or of any other capitall sinne rise in their hearts, they resist and strive against them, by being displeased at them in their will, so that they follow not those wicked motions in their deeds ; and if through frailty they fall, as it were against their will, and through ignorance, their conscience soone after so grieveth and paineth them for it, that they can take no rest till they have made their confession, and had absolution for it.

Surely all these soules that thus live in this state of reforming, and be found therein at the hour of their death, shall be saved, and shall come to a full reforming

ming in the blis of heaven though it were so, that they never had spiritual feeling, nor inward tast of devotion, nor any speciall gift or grace of sweetnesse or comfort in all their life time. For if thou shouldst say; that no soule shall be saved, unlesse she were here reformed in spirituall feeling, so that she hath felt devotion and spiritual sweetnesse in God, as some soules through special grace have done; then should very few soules be saved, in comparison of the multitude of the other.

Nay, it is not so to be supposed,<sup>1</sup> that onely for the soules that have had such extraordinary devotion, or have through great grace come to a spirituall feeling, and for no more, our Lord Jesus should have taken upon him the nature of man, and suffered the bitter passion of his death. It had been but a small purchase for him to have come from so farre to so neer, and from so high to so low, for so few soules; Nay his mercy is spread larger then so. But on the contrary, if thou imaginest the passion of our Lord to be so precious, and his mercy so great, that there shall no soul be damned, and nameli no Christian, do he never so wickedly, as some fools do imagine, surely thou erreth greatly.

Go therefore in the middle way, and hold thee there, and believe as *Holy Church* believeth, and that is, that the most sinfull man that liveth on earth if through grace he turne his will from deadly sinne by true repentance to the service of God, he is reformed in his soule, and if he dye in this state, he shall be saved. Thus hath our Lord promised by his Prophet, saying; *At what time soever a sinner shall be converted, and sorry for his sinnes, he shall live, and not dye.*

And on the other side, who so liveth in deadly sin, and will not leave it, nor amend him thereof, nor receive the Sacrament of penance, or else if he receive it, taketh it not truly, for the love of God, (that is, for the love of vertue and cleannesse, but onely for dread or shame of the world, or onely

onely for feare of the paines of Hell ) he is not reformed to the image of God , and if he dye in that state, he shall not be saved, his Faith shall not save him, for it is but a dead Faith , because it lacketh love , and therefore it will not serve his turne. But they that have Faith quickned with love and charity , though it be but the least degree of charity, as are simple souls who feele not the gift of speciall devotion , nor have spirituall knowledge or feeling of God , as some spirituall men have , but believe in generall as *Holy Church* believeth , though they know not fully what that is ( for it is not necessary that they should know so fully ) but in that beliefe keep themselves in love and charity to their Neighbour as well as they can, and eschew all deadly sinne according to their best skill , and do deeds of mercy to their Neighbours ; all these belong to the blisse of Heaven : For thus is it written in the Apocalypse ; *Yee that feare God both great and small , praise him.* By *great* ones are understood soules that are profiting in grace , or that are perfect in the love of God , which are reformed in spirituall feeling. By *small*, unperfect soules of worldly men and women , and others that have but a childish knowledge of God , and full little feeling of him, but are brought forth in the bosome of *Holy Church* , and nourished with the Sacraments , as children are fed with milke. All these ought to love God , and thank him for the salvation of their souls, which proceedeth from his endlesse mercy and goodnesse. For *Holy Church* which is mother of all these , and beareth tender love to all her ghostly children , prayeth and asketh for them all tenderly of her Spouse , that is, of Jesus , and getteth them health of soule through vertue of his passion ; and namely for them that cannot speak for themselves by spiritual prayer for their need.

Thus I finde in the Gospell, that the woman of *Canaan* asked of our Lord health for her daughter that was troubled with the Fiend ; and our Lord at the first made dainty of the matter , because she was an alien ; Nevertheless she ceased not to cry till our Lord had

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had granted her asking, and said to her thus; *O woman great is thy faith, be it unto thee as thou wilt, in the same houre was her daughter made whole.* This woman betokeneth *Holy Church*, that asketh helpe of our Lord for simple \* ignorant soules that are encombred with temptations of the world, and cannot speake perfectly to God by fervour of devotion, nor by burning love in *Contemplation*; And though our Lord seemeth to make dainty at first, because they are as it were aliened from him. Neverthelesse, for the great Faith and desert of *Holy Church*, he granteth to her all that she will. And so these simple soules that believe stedfastly as *Holy Church* believeth, and put themselves wholly upon the mercy of God, and submit themselves under the Sacraments and Lawes of *Holy Church*, are saved through the prayers and faith of their holy Mother the *Church*.

\* *Unknowing*

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### CHAP. VIII.

*That soules reformed need ever to fight and strive against the motions of sinne while they live here: And how a soule may know when shee assenteth to those motions, and when not.*

**T**His reforming in Faith is easily gotten, but it is not so easily held: And therefore that man or woman that is reformed to the likenesse of God in Faith, must use much labour and diligence, if they will keep this Image whole and cleane, that it fall not downe againe through weakenesse of will to the image of sin. He may not be idle or carelesse; for the image of sinne is so neare fastned unto him, and so continually presseth upon him by diverse stirrings of sinne, that unlesse he be very wary, he shall very easily through consent fall againe thereto. And therefore he needeth to be ever striving and fighting against the wicked stirrings of this image of sinne, and that he make no accord



accord with them, nor have friendship with them, to be plyable to their unlawfull biddings, for in so doing he beguileth himselfe. But verily if he strive with them, he need not be much afraid of consenting; for striving breaketh peace and false accord. It is good indeed that a man have peace with all things, save with the Fiend and this image of sinne, for against them ought he ever to fight in his thoughts and in his deeds, till he hath gotten the mastery, which will never be fully in this life, as long as he beareth and feeleth this image. I say not but that a soule may, through grace, have the upper hand of this image, so farre that he will not follow nor assent to the inordinate motions of it, but to be cleane delivered from it, so that he shall feel no suggestions nor jangling of fleshly affections or of vaine thoughts at any time, that can no man come to in this life.

I trow that a soule that is reformed in feeling, by ravishing of love in Contemplation of God, may be farre from the sensuality and from vaine imaginations, and so farre drawne out and parted from the fleshly motions for a time, that she shall feele nothing but God; but such a case lasteth not alwayes. And therefore I say, that every man ought to strive against this image of sinne, and namely he that is reformed in Faith onely, who may so easily be deceived by the same. In the person of which men St. Paul saith; *The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.* That is, a soule reformed to the likeness of God fighteth against the sensuall motions of the image of sinne, and also this image of sin fighteth against the will of the spirit.

Gal. 5.

Rom. 7.

This kinde of fighting betweene these two severall images St. Paul knew and felt, when he said thus; *I finde a law in my members fighting against the law of my minde, and leading me captive to the law of sinne.* By these two lawes in a soule I understand this double image; By the law of the spirit, I understand the reason of the soule, when it is reformed to the image of God:

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God : By the law of the flesh, I understand the sensuality, which I call the image of sin. In these two laws a soule reformed leads his life, as St. Paul saith, in these words ; *With my minde I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sinne.*

Nevertheless that a soule reformed should not despair though she serve the law of sinne by feeling of the vicious sensuality against the will of the spirit, because of the corruption of corporall nature, St. Paul excuseth it, saying thus of his owne person ; *For not that good that I would, do I, but the evill that I hate that I doe ; but if I doe the evill that I hate, it is not I that worketh it, but sinne that dwelleth in me.* That is, I would feele no fleshly stirrings, but that do I not, but the sinfull stirrings of my flesh I hate, and yet I feele them : Nevertheless since it is so that I have the wicked stirrings of my flesh, and yet I feele them and oft delight in them against my will, they shall not be layd to my charge, to my condemnation, as if I had done them. And why ? For the corruption of this image of sinne doth them, and not I.

Lo St. Paul in his owne person comforteth all souls that through grace are reformed in Faith, that they should not too much dread the burthen of this image with the inordinate motions thereof, if it be so that they do not willingly and deliberately yield thereto : Yet in this point, many soules that are reformed in truth, are oft times much tormented and troubled in vain, as thus ; when they have felt fleshly motions of pride, or of envy, of coveteousness or luxury, or of any other chiefe sin, they know not whether they consent thereto or no, and it is no great wonder ; for in time of temptation frail mans thoughts are so troubled and so overlayd, that he hath no cleare sight nor freedome of himself, but is overtaken often with liking unwarily, and so that liking passeth perhaps a good while within him ere he well perceive it, and therefore falleth sometime in doubt and dread\* whether they sinned in time of temptation or no.

*These stirrings of sin are not too much to be feared.*

*\*Dweeer.*

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As to this point I say, as me thinketh, that a soule may discern by this means whether he consent or no : If it be so that he is moved or tempted to any kinde of sinne, and the liking of it is so great in his fleshly feeling that it troubleth his reason, and as it were with mastery possesseth the affection of his soule, and yet he restraineth himselfe, that he performeth not the sinne in deed, nay nor would not if he might, but is rather pained to feele the liking of that sin, and faine would put it away if he could : And when that stirring is over, is glad and well apaid that he is delivered from it ; By this may he gather, that were the liking never so great in his fleshly feeling, yet he consented nor sinned, not especially mortally in the businesse.

*And yet  
not to be ne-  
glected.*

*\*Wretched-  
nesse.*

Nevertheless a good and secure remedy it were for such simple soules being in such a case, and cannot helpe it, that they be not too bold in themselves, utterly weening that such fleshly stirrings with liking are no sinnes at all, for so they may fall into \*carelesse and a false security : Neither on the other side that they be too fearefull, or foolish, as to deem them all as deadly sins, or as great venials ; for neither is true, but that he hold them all as sins and wretchednesse, and that he have sorrow for them, and be not too busie in judging them either deadly or veniall : But if his conscience be greatly grieved, that he goe speedily, and shew to his Confessor in generall or in speciall such stirrings, and namely every stirring that beginneth to fasten any roote in the heart, and most possesseth it, for to draw it down to sinne and worldly vanity ; And when he hath thus confessed in generall or in particular, let him assuredly believe that they be forgiven, and dispute no more about them that are passed and forgiven, whether they were mortall or veniall. But let him be the more carefull to carry himselfe better against such as shall afterwards arise ; And if he do so, then may he come to have quiet in his conscience : But some are so unwise, and so grosse, that they would feele, or see, or heare the for-

forgivenesse of their finnes, as clearely and palpably as they might see or feele a bodily thing; and because they cannot, therefore they fall oft into such \* feares <sup>\* Weeres.</sup> and doubts of themselves, and never come to rest; and in that they are unwise, for Faith goeth before Feeling.

Our Lord, when he healed a man sicke of the palsey, said thus to him; *Trust* (my sonne) *that thy sins are forgiven thee.* That is, believe stedfastly; he said not to him, see, feele, how that thy finnes are forgiven (for the forgivenesse of finnes is done spirituallly and invisibly, through the grace of the Holy Ghost) but *believe it.* On the same manner, every one that desireth to have peace of conscience, it becometh him (having done what lay in his power) to believe without spirituall feeling and forgivenesse of his sins. And if at first he believe it, he shall afterward, through grace feel it, and understand it, that it is so. Thus saith the Apostle; *Unlesse ye believe, yee shall not understand.* Faith goeth before, and understanding cometh after, and this understanding (which I call the light of grace, that cometh from God) a soul cannot have, but through great cleanness, as our Lord saith, *Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.* Matth. 5. Not with their fleshly eye, but their inward eye, that is, their understanding, cleansed and enlightned through grace of the Holy Ghost, to see the truth; the which cleanness a soule cannot feele, unlesse she have firme faith and belief going before, as the Apostle saith; *By faith, purifying the heart,* That is, our Lord through Acts 15. Faith cleanseth the hearts of his chosen. It is necessary therefore that a soul first believe the reforming of himselfe made through the Sacrament of penance, though she see it not; and that he dispose himselfe fully to live righteously and vertuously, as his Faith requireth: so that afterward he may come to *sight*, and to the reforming in feeling.



## CHAP. IX.

*That this image is both faire and foule, whilst it is in this life here, though it be reformed, and of the differences of the secret feelings of those that be reformed, and those that be not.*

Cant. I.

**F**Air is a mans soul, and soul is a mans soul; Fair, inasmuch as it is reformed in faith to the likeness of God: But foule, inasmuch as it is mingled with sensual feelings, and inordinate motions of this image of sinne. Foule it is without, like a beast; fair within, like an Angel. Foule in the feeling of sensuality, faire in truth of reason. Foul for the fleshly appetites, faire for the good will. Thus is a chosen soule both faire and foule, according to the saying of holy writ; *I am blacke, but beautifull, O daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, and as the Curtains of Salomon.* That is, O ye Angels of heaven, that are daughters of the high Jerusalem, wonder not at me, nor despise me for my black shadow: For though I be black without, because of my fleshly nature, as the tents of Kedar: Yet am I full faire within, as the curtains of Salomon, in that I am reformed to the image of God. By Kedar is understood a reprobate soule, which is the tent of the Devill. By Solomon is understood our Lord Jesus, for he is peace, or peaceable: By the Curtaine of Salomon is understood a blessed Angell, in whom our Lord dwelleth, and is hid in him.

Cant. I.

Now may a chosen soul, with humble trust in God, and joy of heart, say thus; Though I be blacke, because of my body of sinne, like a reprobate soule, that is one of the tabernacles of the Fiend; Yet within am I faire (through Faith and good will) like an Angel of Heaven. For so saith he in another place, *Looke not upon me, because that I am blacke, for that the Sun hath altered my colour.* The Sun maketh a skin swart  
onely

onely without, and not within; and it betokeneth this fleshly life. Therefore thus saith the chosen Soule; Rebuke me not because I am swarte, for the swartenesse I have is all without, by the touching and carrying about me this Image of sin: but it is nothing within. And therefore soothly though it be so that a chosen soul, reformed in faith, dwell in this body of sin, and feel the same fleshly stirrings, and use the same bodily workes, as doth a Tabernacle of Kedar, so far forth that in mans judgment there be no difference betwixt the one and the other, yet within in their soules, and in the sight of God there is a full great \* difference. But to know this, which is the one, and which is the other, is onely kept to God; for it passeth mans judgment and mans feeling. And therefore we ought not to judge any man evill, for that thing that may be used both evill and well.

\* *Twining.*

A soule, that is not reformed, is so fully taken up with the love of the world, and so much overlaid with the liking of his flesh in all his sensuality, that he chooseth it as a full rest of his heart, and in the secret desires thereof nothing else would he have, but onely that he might ever be sure thereof: he feeleth within him no liquor of grace, moving him to lothe his fleshly life, nor to desire Heaven or blisse. And therefore we may say that he beareth not this Image of sin, but is borne of it: like a man that is sick, and so weake, that he cannot beare himselfe, and therefore is laid on a bed, and borne in a litter. Right so, such a sinfull soule is so weake and impotent, for lack of grace, that he can neither move hand nor foot to doe any good deed, nor to resist (by displeasing of will) the least motion of sinne, when it cometh, but falls down thereto, just like a Beast upon carryon. But a soul that is reformed, though he use his fleshly senses and feell fleshly stirrings, yet he lotheth them in

*How to distinguish betwixt the motions of lust in the reformed and unreformed.*

his heart for he would not for any good, rest in them fully, but fleeth any such rest in them, as the biting of an Adder, and had rather have his rest and the love of his heart in God, if he could; and sometimes actually aspieth thereto, and often grudgeth at the fleeing of the pleasures of this life, for love of the life everlasting. This soule is not born by this Image of sin, like a sick man, though he feel it; but he beareth it, for through grace he is made mighty and strong to suffer and beare his body, with all the evill stirrings of it, without hurting or defiling himselfe, in as much as he loveth them not, nor followeth them, nor consenteth to deadly sins, as another doth.

Joh. 5.

This was bodily fulfilled in the Gospell, by a man sick of the pallsie, who was so feeble, that he could not goe, and therefore was laid and born in a litter, and brought to our Lord: and when he saw him in that misery, of his goodnesse he said to him: *Arise, and take up thy Bed, and go home to thy house:* and so he did, and was whole. And soothly right as this man bare upon his back, when he was made whole, the Bed that before bare him: Right so it may be said in the spirituall sence, that a soule, reformed in faith, beareth this Image of sin, which bare him before. And therefore be not too much adread of thy blacknesse, that thou hast by bearing of this Image of sin: But onely for the shame of the discomfort that thou hast from the beholding of it, and also for the upbraiding that thou feelest in thy heart of thy ghostly enemies, when they say to thee thus; *Where is thy Lord, Jesus? what seekest thou? where is the fairenesse that thou speakest of? what feelest thou else but blindnesse of sin? where is that Image of God, that thou sayest is reformed in thee?* Comfort thy selfe, and be faithfull stilly, as I said before, and if thou do so, thou shalt, by this faith, destroy all the temptations of thy enemies. Thus saith St. Paul: *Take unto you the Buckler of faith, with which thou shalt be able to quench all the burning Darts of the enemy.*

Ephes. 6.

CHAP. X.

*Of three sorts of men, whereof some be not reformed, and some be reformed onely in faith, and some both in faith and feeling.*

**B**Y that which I have said, thou mayest percieve, that according to the diverse parts of the soule are diverse states of men; Some are reformed to the likenesse of God, and some are not; and some are reformed only in faith, & some both in faith and feeling. For thou must understand, that a soul hath two parts; The one is called sensuality, and that is fleshly feeling by the five outward senses, which is common to man with beatts; of the which sensuality, when it is unskillfully and inordinately ruled, is made up the Image of sin. That is when it is not ruled after reason, for then is the sensuality sin. The other part is called reason, and that is parted also into two, into the superiour, and inferiour part. The superiour part is likened to a man, for it should be Master and Sovereign, and that is properly the Image of God, for by that onely the soul knoweth God, and loveth him. And the inferiour is likened to a woman, for it should be obedient to the other part of reason, as woman is subject to man. And this consisteth in the knowing and ruling of earthly things, for to use them discreetly according as we have need of them, and to refuse them when we have no need of them, and to have ever with it an eye upwards towards the superiour part of reason with dread and reverence, to follow and be guided by it.

Now may I say, that a soul that liveth after the likings, and lustes of his flesh, is as it were a brute Beast; and neither hath knowledge of God, nor desire of vertues, nor of good living, but is all blinded in pride, fretted with envy, overlayed with covetousness, defiled



with Lechery, and other great sins : is not reformed to the likenesse of God : for it lyeth and resteth fully in the Image of sin, that is in sensuality. Another soul, that seareth God, and resisteth deadly stirrings of the sensuall part, and followeth them not, but liveth according to reason, in ruling and ordering of worldly things, and setteth his intent and his will for to please God by his outward workes, is reformed to the likenesse of God, in faith; and though he feel the same stirrings of sin, as the other doth, they shall not disease him, for he resteth not in them, as the other doth. But another soule, that, through grace fleeth all deadly stirrings of sensuality, and all venialls also, so far forth that he fleeth them not, keeping under the very first risings, is reformed in feeling; for he followeth and is led by the superiour part of reason, and this he doth by the beholding of God and spirituall things, as I shall tell thee afterwards.

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### CHAP. XI.

*How men that abide and live in sin, mis-shape themselves into the likenesse of diverse beasts, and they be called the lovers of the world.*

A wretched man is he then, that knoweth not the worthynesse of his Soul nor will know it, how it is the most worthy creature that ever God made, except an Angel, to whom yet it is like; high above all others the which nothing can satisfie as its full rest, but onely God; And therefore should he not love nor like any thing, but him onely, nor covet nor seek any thing, but how he may be reformed to his Image; for he knoweth not this, therefore seeketh he and coveteth his rest and his liking outwardly in bodily creatures, that are worse then himselfe. Unnaturally  
doth

doth he and unreasonably, that leaveth the soveraign good and everlasting life ( which is God ) unsought, and unloved, unknown and unworshiped, and chooseth his rest and his blisse in the fading delight of an earthly thing. And yet thus do all the lovers of this world, that have their joy and their blisse in this wretched life. Some have it in pride and vain-glory of themselves, that when they have lost the seare of God, they travell and study night and day how they may come to the worship and praise of the world, and care not by what meanes they come thereto, and surpasse all other men, either in Learning, or any other skill, in name or in fame, in riches or in respect, in soveraignty and masterhip. Some men have their rest in riches, and in outrageous getting of worldly goods, and set their hearts so fully to get them, that they seeke nothing else but how they may come thereto. Some have their liking in fleshly lusts of Gluttony and Lechery, and other bodily uncleannesse, and some in one thing, and some in another.

And thus wretchedly these that doe thus, misshape themselves from the worthinesse of a man, and turne themselves into the likenesse of divers beasts. A proud man is turned into a Lyon, for pride; for he would be feared and worshipped by all, and that none should withstand the fulfilling of his fleshly will, neither in word nor deed. And if any one contradict his proud will, he becometh angry and wroth, and would

*The proud  
turned into  
a Lion.*

\* revenge himselfe on him, as a Lyon wrekeeth himselfe on a little Beast. He that doth thus is not a man, for he doth unnaturally and unreasonably against the kinde of a man, and so is turned and transformed into a Lyon.

*\*wroken of  
him.*

Envious and angry men are turned into hounds, through wrath and envy, that barketh against his Neighbour, and biteth him by wicked and malicious words, and with wrongfull deeds grieveth them that have not trespassed against him, harming them both in body and soule, contrary to Gods bidding.

*The envious and angry  
into hounds.*

*The idle  
into asses.*

Some men are mis-shapen into asses, that are slow to the service of God, and evill willed to do any good deed to their Neighbour : They are ready enough to run for worldly profit, and for earthly honour, or for pleasing of earthly man : But for procuring reward in Heaven ; for helping of their own souls, or for the worship of God, they are soon weary, they have no liit thereto ; and if they must goe about any such thing they go but slowly, and with an unwilling mind.

*The lust-  
full into  
swine.*

Some are turned into swine, for they are so blinde in their understandings, and so brutish in their manners, that they have no fear of God, but follow onely the lustes and likings of the flesh, and have no regard to the vertues and honesty, be seeming the noble nature of man, nor to order themselves according to the rules of right reason, nor to refrain the unreasonable motions of sensuall nature, but as soon as a fleshly or sensuall motion of sin riseth within them, they are ready to fall down thereto, and follow it as swine.

*The covetous  
into  
Wolves.*

Some men are turned into Wolves, that live by ravening : as bad covetous men do, that through violence or might, rob or deceive their Neighbours of their worldly goods ; and some are turned into Foxes, as false and deceiving people, that live in treachery and guile.

All these and many more, that live not in the fear of God, but break his Commandments, transforme themselves from the likenesse of God, and make themselves like Beasts, yea and worse then Beasts, for they are like to the fiend of Hell. And therefore verily these men that live thus, if they be not reformed when the houre of death cometh, and their souls part from their bodies, then shall their eyes be opened, which are now blinded with sin, and then shall they find and feel the torment of their wretchednesse that they lived in here. And forasmuch as the Image of God was not reformed through the Sacrament of penance in them, neither in faith nor feeling, here in this life, they shall be cast out from the blessed face of our Creator as cursed, and shall be condemned with the Devil

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vill into the depth of Hell, there to remain for ever. Thus saith St. John in the *Apocalyps*, *The fearfull and unbelievers, the cursed, Murderers, Fornicators, Sorcerers, Idolaters, and all that love and make a lye, their portion shall be in the pit that burnes with fire and brimstone.* If the lovers of this world would often think of this, how all this world shall passe away, and draw to an end, and how that all wicked love shall be most severely punished, they would in a short time loath all worldly lusts, which they now take most delight in; and would lift up their hearts to love God, and would carefully seek and labour how they might be reformed to his likeness, ere they passe hence.

Apoc. 21.

### CHAP. XII.

#### SECT. I.

*How lovers of this world diverse wayes disenable themselves from becoming reformed in their soules.*

**B**Ut some now will say thus; I would faine love God, and be a good man, and forsake the love of the world, if I might: but I have not grace for it, if I had the same grace that a good man hath, I should do as he doth, but because I have it not, I cannot, and so I need \* seek to do no more, but am excused.

\* *It is to me to wyte no more.*

Unto these men I answer thus; True it is as they say, that they have no grace, and therefore they lye still in their sin, and cannot rise out: But that availeth them not before God, for it is their own fault. They disenable themselves diverse wayes, so that the light of grace cannot shine into them, nor rest in their hearts. For some are so froward, that they will not have grace, nor be good men at all: for that they know well, if they should turn good men, they must part with the great liking and lust of this world, which they have in earthly things; but that they will not doe, for they



\* *Ugen.*

think they are so sweet that they will not part with them: And they must also do works of penance, as fasting, watching, praying, and many other good works, in chastising of their flesh, and in withdrawing of their fleshly will, and these may they not doe, for they seeme so sharpe and so terrible to their thinking, that they \* shrinke and lothe to think upon them, and so they cowardly and wretchedly still dwell in their sinnes.

Some would seeme desirous of grace, and begin to dispose themselves for it, but their will is exceedingly weake, for as soone as any stirring of sinne cometh, though it be contrary to the command of God, they fall presently thereto, for they are (through former custome of often falling, and assenting to sin) so as it were bound and tyed to sinne, that they thinke it impossible to withstand it: and so their imagined difficulty of being able to make such resistance, maketh their will weake, and smiteth it downe againe.

Some also feelee the stirrings of grace, as when they have bitings of conscience for their evill living, and motions to leave it, but it seems so painful and grievous to them, that they will not suffer it nor abide it, but flye from it, and forget it if they can, so that they run to seeke comfort and contentment outwardly, at such times, in fleshly creatures, to the end that they may not feelee such pangs of conscience within their soules. And moreover some men are so blinde and so brutish, that they thinke there is no other life but this, nay that there is no soule, other then of a Beast, and that the soule of a man dyeth with the body, as the soule of a beast; and therefore they say, Let us eate and drink, and make merry here, for of this life we are secure, we see no other heaven.

Verily such are some wretches, that say thus in their hearts, though they say it not with their mouths. Of which men the Prophet saith thus; *The foole hath said in his heart there is no God.* Such a foole is every one that loveth or liveth in sinne, and choo-  
seth

seth the love of this World as the rest of his soule, he saith there is no God, not with his mouth, for he will speake of him sometimes, when the World goes well with him, as it were in reverence of him, saying, Blessed be God: And sometimes in despight, when he is angry against God or his Neighbour, and sweareth by his blessed body, or any of his members. But he saith in his thoughts, that there is no God, and that is because he imagineth that God seeth not his sinne, or that he will not punish it so severely as the Scripture saith, or that he will forgive him his sinne though he see it, or else that there shall no Christian be damned do he never so ill. Or else if he fast the Fastes of our Lady, or say every day so many Prayers, or heare every day two or three Masses, or doe some bodily worke, as it were for the honour of God, he thinketh he shall never goe to Hell, do he never so much sinne, and continue in it. This man saith in his heart that there is no God, but is unwise, as the Prophet saith, for he shall one day finde and seele in torments, that he is a God, whom he forgate and set at nought; but set by the wealth of the world, as the Prophet saith; *Paine onely will give understanding.* Jer. 28. For he that knoweth not this here, nor will know it, shall know it well when he is in torments.

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SECT. II.

*A little Counsell how lovers of this World should doe, if they will be reformed in their soules, before their departure hence.*

**T**Hese men though they know well that they are out of grace, and in deadly sin, they have no care nor sorrow nor thought therefore, but give themselves

selves to sensuall mirth and worldly solace, as much as they can? And the farther they be from grace, the more mirth they make, and perchance some of them hold themselves well apaid, that they have no grace, that they may as it were the more fully and freely follow the liking of fleshly lusts, as though God were asleep, and did not see them. And this is one of the greatest faults that can be. And thus, by their own perversenesse, they stop the light of grace from their own soul, that it may not rest therein. The which grace, for its part, is most willing and ready to shine to all creatures, and enter into the souls of men, that will but be willing to receive it, even as the Sun shineth upon all creatures bodily, where it is not hindered. Thus saith Saint *John* in the Gospell, *The light shineth in darknesse, and the darknesse comprehended it not.* That is, these blind hearts receive not the gracious light, nor have the benefit of it, but even as a blinde man is \* becompassed with the light of the Sun, when he standeth in it, and yet seeth it not, nor receiveth any benefit of it, as for going, or walking, or working by it: Even so, spiritually, a soul blinded with deadly sin, is all incompassed with this spirituall light, and yet he is never the better, for he is blinded, and will not see nor know his blindnesse, and this is one of the greatest impediments of grace, that a man so wretched will not, by reason of his pride, be aknowen of his blindnesse; or else, if he know it, careth not for it, but maketh merry, as if he were very secure and safe.

\* *Umbi-  
lapped.*

Therefore unto all these men that are thus blinded, and bound with the love of this world, and are faine from the naturall fairnesse of man, and are become mis-shapen, I say and counsell, that they would think on their soules, and dispose themselves for grace, as much as they can; which they may do on this wise, if they will; when they find themselves out of the state of grace, and over-layed with deadly sin, let them first think with themselves, what a miserable and dangerous thing it is to be out of the state of grace, and

sepe-

seperated from God ; for there is nothing that holdeth them from falling into the pit of Hell presently, save the bare single thred of this bodily life, whereby they hang; and what may more easily be broken in two, then a single thred ? For were the breath stopped in their body (and that may easily happen) their soul would presently passe out, and would instantly be in Hell, there to remain everlastingly. And if they would but thus think with themselves for some time, they would shake and tremble at the righteous judgments of God, and at his severe punishing of sins, and they would begin to grieve and sorrow for their sins, and for their want of Gods grace and favour, and then would they cry and pray that they might have grace, and if they did thus, then would grace enter in, and put out darknesse, and hardnesse of heart, and weakness of their will, and give them might and strength to forsake the false love of this world ; so far at least as it is deadly sin: for there is no soul so far from God, through wilfulnesse in deadly sin (I except none that liveth in this body of sin) that may not through grace become righteous, & be restored to cleanness of living, if he will but bowe and submit his will to God with humility, for to amend his life, and heartily aske grace and forgiveness of him, and excuse our Lord, and wholly accuse himself. For holy Writ saith, *I will not, saith the Lord; the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live*, for our Lords will is, that the most froward man that liveth, and who through sin is mishapen in soul, if he will but change his will, and aske grace : may be reformed to his likenesse.

Ezek. 33.





## THE SECOND PART.

Of reforming in Faith and  
Feeling also.

## C H A P. I.

*That this reforming cannot be suddenly gotten, but in length of time, by grace, and much spirituall and corporall Industry.*

**T**HE reforming in Faith, which I have before treated of, may easily be gotten. But after this cometh reforming in *Faith* and *Feeling*, which will not easily be gotten, but by much paines and industry. For reforming in Faith is common to all chosen soules, though they be in the lowest degree of Charity: But reforming in feeling is onely in those soules that are coming to the state of perfection, and that cannot be attained unto suddenly, but after great plenty of grace, and much and long spiritual exercising. and thereby shall a man attaine thereto, and that will be after that he is first healed of his spirituall sicknesse, and after that all bitter passions and fleshly lusts, and other old feelings are burnt out of the heart by the fire of desire; and  
new

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new gracious feelings are brought in with burning love and spiritual light. Then doth the soule \* draw \* *Hygbeth.* very neare to perfection, and to reforming in feeling.

And here it is no otherwise then, as when a man through bodily sicknesse is brought neere to death, though he receive a medicine, by the which he is restored, and is freed from the danger of death, yet cannot he therefore presently rise up, and goe to worke, as a sound man may; for the feeblenesse of his body keeps him downe, so that he must rest, and follow the use of Medicines, and use a good dyet, by measure, according to the advice of a Physitian, till he hath fully recovered his health. Right so in this spirituall businesse, he who through deadly sinne is brought to a spirituall death, though through the Medicine of the Sacrament of penance he be restored to life, so that he shall not be damned; Neverthelesse he is not presently whole, and cured of all his passions, and of all his fleshy desires, nor is apt for Contemplation; but he must abide a great while, and take good heed to himselfe, and order himselfe so, that he may recover perfect health of soule; for he shall linger a great while, ere he be fully whole. Yet if he take Medicines, by the counsell of a good spirituall Physitian, and use them in time with measure and discretion, he shall much the sooner be restored to his spirituall strength, and come to reforming in feeling: For reforming in Faith is the lowest state of all chosen soules, for beneath that they cannot well be.

But reforming in feeling is the highest state in this life, that the soule can come to. But from the lowest to the highest a soule cannot suddenly start, no more then a man that would climb upon a ladder that is high, and setteth his foote upon the lowest staffe, can at the next step get up to the highest, but must goe by degrees from one to another, till he come to the highest.

Even so it is spiritually, no man becometh suddenly  
supream

\* *Slye.*

supream or high in grace, but through long exercise, and \* cunning working of the soule may he come thereto, namely when he (in whom all grace lyeth) helpeth and teacheth a wretched soule, for without his special help and inward teaching, can no soule arrive thereto.

## C H A P. II.

## S E C T. I.

*The causes why so few soules in comparison of the multitude of others, come to this reforming that is both in Faith and Feeling.*

**B**Ut now thou wilt say, since our Lord is so courteous of his goodnesse, and so free of his gracious gifts, it is a wonder that so few soules (as it seemes) in comparison of the multitude of others, come to this reforming in feeling. It would seem that either he is unwilling; but that is not so, or that he hath no regard of his creatures, who by receiving of Faith are become his servants.

1 *Cause.*

Unto this I answer, that one occasion is this; Many that are reformed in Faith, set not their hearts to profit in grace, nor to seeke a higher estate of good living, through much industry in praying and thinking, and other bodily and spirituall exercises; but thinke it enough for them to keepe themselves from deadly sinnes, and to stand still in the plight they are in; For they say it is enough for them to be saved, and have the least degree in heaven, they will covet no more.

Thus perchance, do some soules, who are in the state of grace, and lead an active life in the world, say or thinke; and it is no wonder, for they are so busied with worldly things that are needfull to be done, that they

they cannot fully set their hearts to profit in spirituall exercises. But neverthelesse such proceeding is perilous to them, for they fall daily, and are now up, and now downe, and cannot come to the stability of good living. yet are they somewhat excusable, by reason of their condition of life. But other men and women who are free from worldly busineses if they will, and may have their needfull sustenance without much solicitude about it, especially Religious men and women, who have bound themselves by entring into Religion, to the state of perfection; and other men also in secular estate, that have good abilities and understanding, and may (if they will dispose themselves) come to much grace; these men are more to blame. These persons I say are more to blame, for they stand still, as idle, and will not profit in grace, nor in further seeking to come to the love and knowledge of God.

For verily it is perilous for a soule to be reformed only in Faith, and will not seeke to make any further progresse, nor give himselfe diligently to spirituall exercises, for so he may easily loose that he hath, and fall againe into deadly sinne. For a soul cannot stand still alwayes in one state, for it is either profiting in grace, or decaying through sin. For it fareth with him, as it doth with a man that were drawn out of a pit, and when he's up, would go no further then the pits brinke, surely he were a very foole, for a little puffle of winde, or an unwary moving of himselfe, might soone cast him downe againe, and that worse then he was before. But if he flye as far as he can from the brinke and goe forward, on further ground; then, though there come a great storme, he is the more secure from falling into the pit. Right so is it in this spirituall businesse; he that is drawn out of the pit of sinne through reforming of Faith, and when he is out of deadly sinne thinketh himself secure enough, and therefore will not profit, but remaineth still at the pits brinke, as near as he may, he is not wise; for upon the least temptation of the enemy, or of his flesh,

*Its dangerous to be content with a low degree of grace.*



flesh, he falleth into sinne again. But if he flee from the pit; that is, if he set his heart fully to come to more grace, and to use his best industry to come thereto, and give himselfe heartily to prayer, meditating, and other good workes; though great temptations rise against him, he falleth not easily to deadly sin again.

And verily it is a wonder to me, that seeing grace is so good and so profitable, why a man, when he hath but a little thereof, yea so little that he can scarce have lesse, should say, ho, I will have no more of this, for I have enough. When yet I see a worldly man, though he have of worldly goods much more then he needeth; yet will he never say, ho, I have enough, I will have no more of this. But will covet more and more, and bestir all his wits and might, and will never set a stint to his coveteousness, to get more. Much more then should a chosen soule covet spirituall good, which is everlasting, and which maketh a soul blessed, and never should cease from coveting, if he did well, to get what he get might: For he that most coveteth, most shall have; and surely if he do thus, he shall profit and grow in grace greatly.

2 Cause.

Another cause of such fewnesse of soules reformed in feeling, is this; Some men that are reformed in Faith, in the beginning of their turning to God, set themselves in a certaine manner of working, whether it be spirituall or corporal, and thinke ever to hold on in that manner of working, and not to change it for any other that cometh through grace, though it were better, imagining the first course to be best for them to hold on in, and therefore they rest therein, and through custome so binde themselves thereto, that when they have fulfilled it, they finde themselves wonderfully well satisfied, for they imagine they have done a great good thing therein for God; And if it chance that they be at any time hindred from their said custome, though it be by a just occasion, they are sad and troubled in conscience, as if they had done a great deadly sin.

These

These men hinder themselves some-what from feeling of more grace, for they set their perfection in a corporall work, and so they make an end in the midst of the way, where no end is. For those corporall or sensible customes, which men use in their beginnings, are good, but they are but meanes and wayes to leade a soule forward to perfection.

*It is not good to  
eye our selves to  
any customary de-  
votions unaltera-  
bly.*

And therefore he that setteth his perfection in any bodily or spirituall exercise, which he feeleth in the beginning of his turning to God, and will seeke no further, but ever rest therein, he hindereth himselfe greatly. For it is but a silly way of trading, wherein an Apprentice is ever in the same degree of skill, and can doe as much in it on the first day, as he can thirty yeares after. Or else if the Trade be good and subtle, he is but of a dull wit, or an evill will that profiteth not therein.

Now it is certaine, that of all Crafts, the service of God is most soveraigne and most subtle, and the highest and hardest to come to perfection in it, and also the most profitable and gainfull to them that faithfully prosecute it; and therefore it seemeth, that the Apprentices to it that are ever alike in learning, are either dull witted, or evill willed.

I doe not reprove those customes that men use in their beginnings, whether they be corporall or spirituall; but say that they be full good and \* profitable for them to use. But I would that they should hold them onely as a way, and an entry towards spirituall feeling, and that they use them as convenient meanes, till better come; and that while they use them, they covet after better. And then if better come that are more spirituall, and more drawing in of the thoughts from fleshlinesse, and sensuality, and vaine imaginations, if that same better thing should be hindered, by cleaving still to their former customes,

M

that

\* Disease.

Psalm 83.

that then they leave such their custome (when it may be left without scandall or \* harme to others, and follow that which they seele. But if neither hinder the other, that then they use both, if they may. I meane not of leaving customes necessary through bond of Law, or of rule, or of penance, but of others voluntarily undertaken. Thus saith the Prophet in the Psalms; *Surely the Law-giver will give his blessing, they shall go from strength to strength, and the God of Gods shall be seene in Sion.* That is, our Saviour will give his grace to chosen soules, calling them from sinne, and making them righteous through good workes to his likenesse; through which grace they shall profit and grow from vertue to vertue, till they come to *Sion*, that is, till they come to Contemplation, in which they shall see the God of Gods, that is, they shall see well that there is but one God.

## S E C T. II.

*How that without great corporall and spirituall Industry, and without much Grace and Humility, soules cannot come to reforming in feeling, nor keep themselves therein after they come thereto.*

**B**UT now thou wilt say, since it is so, that reforming in Faith onely is so low, and so perilous to rest in, for feare of falling againe; and reforming in feeling is so high, and so secure for them that can arrive thereto, therefore covetest thou to know what kind of exercises and Industries were most convenient to be used for it, by the which thou mayest profit and come thereto; or whether there be any one certaine exercise or speciall worke by which a man may come to that grace and that reforming in feeling.

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To this I answer thus ; Thou knowest well that what man or woman that will dispose himself to come to cleanness of heart , and to feeling of grace , it becometh him to use much industry , and great striving both in will , and in deeds continually , against the wicked stirrings of all chiefe sins ; Not onely against pride or envy , but against all other , with all the kinds that come out of them , as I have said before in the first Book. For why : passions and fleshly desires hinder the cleanness of heart , and peace of conscience. And it becometh him also to labour to get all vertues , not onely chastity and temperance , but also patience and mildnesse , charity and humility , and all the other. And this cannot be done by one manner of worke , but by diverse workes , according to the diverse and sundry dispositions of men , as now praying , now meditating , now working some good works , now proving and exercising themselves divers wayes , in hunger , in thirst , in cold , in suffering of shame and despight , if need be , and bodily paines and labours , for the love of vertue and justice. This thou knowest full well , for this thou readest in every Book that treateth of good life : thus saith every man that would stirre up mens soules to the love of God. And so it appeareth , that there is no one special exercise , no certaine worke by which onely a soule can come to that grace , but principally through the grace of our Lord Jesus , and by many and great deeds , in all that hee is able to doe , and yet all is little enough.

And one reason why there must be such paines taking , is this , That since our Lord Jesus himselfe is the speciall Maister , and teacher of this Art , and the speciall Physitian of spiritual sicknesses ; for without him all is nought , it is therefore reasonable , that as he teacheth and stirreth , so a man should follow and worke. But he is a simple Master that cannot teach his Scholar whilst he is learning , but onely one lesson , and he is an unskilfull Physitian , that by one medicine would heale all sores. Therefore our Lord Jesus

*They must  
strive a-  
gainst all  
sins.*



that is so wise and so good, to shew his wisdom and goodnesse teacheth diverse lessons to his Scholars, after that they profit in their learning, and giveth to diverse souls divers and severall medicines, according to the nature of their sickness.

Another reason also is this; If there were one certaine worke by which a soule might come to the perfect love of God, then might a man fancy that he might come thereto by his owne endeavours, and through his owne travell onely, as a Merchapt cometh to his Riches onely by his owne industry and travell. But it is not so in this spirituall businesse, concerning the love of God; for he that will serve God wisely, and come to the perfect love of God, he will covet to have none other reward but him onely. But then for to have him may no creature deserve by his owne travell or industry; for though a man could labour both corporally and spiritually, as much as could all the creatures that ever have been, yet could he not, for all that, onely by his owne working deserve to have God for his reward; for he is the soveraigne blisse, and endlesse goodnesse, and surpasseth without comparison all mens deserts; and therefore he cannot be gotten by any mans speciall working, as a temporall reward may, for he is free, and giveth to whom he will, and when he will, neither for this, nor for that, nor in this time, nor after that time; For though a soule worke all that he can, and may all his life time, yet shall he never have the perfect love of Jesus, till our Lord will freely give it.

*Neither  
grace with-  
out work-  
ing, nor  
working  
without  
grace.*

Nevertheless, on the other side, I say, that God useth not to give such grace, unlesse a man do worke and travell all that he can, and may; yea, till it seem to him that he can worke no more, or else be in full will and desire to do more if he could. And so it seemeth, that neither grace onely, without the full working of the soule so farre as it can, nor the mans working alone, without grace bringeth the soule to the reforming in feeling (the which reforming consisteth

sisteth in perfect love and charity;) But that both joyned together, that is grace joyned to working, bringeth into a soul the blessed feeling of perfect love. The which grace cannot rest fully, but onely on humble soules that be full of the fear of God.

Therefore I may affirme, that he that hath not humility, nor doth use his industry and labour, cannot come to this reforming in feeling. And he hath not full humility, that understandeth and perceiveth not himselfe truly as he is; As thus, He that doth all the good deeds that he can, as fasting, watching, wearing Haire-cloth, and all other sufferings of bodily penance, or doth all the outward workes of mercy to his Neighbour, or else internall workes, as praying, weeping, sighing, meditating, if he alwayes rest in them, and leane so much on them, and so greatly regardeth them in his owne sight and esteem, that he presumeth on his owne deserts, and thinketh himselfe ever rich, and good, holy, and vertuous, verily as long as he feeleth himselfe thus, he is not humble enough; No, though he say or thinke, that all that he doth is of Gods gift, and not of himselfe, he is not yet humble enough; for he doth not as yet make himselfe naked of all his good deeds, nor truly poor in spirit, nor feeles himselfe to be nothing, as indeed he is. And verily till a soule through grace is come sensibly to annihilate her selfe, and strip her selfe of all the good deeds that she doth, through the sight and beholding of the truth of Jesus, she is not perfectly humble; for what is humility, but truth? verily nothing else. And therefore he that through grace can see Jesus, how that he doth all, and himselfe doth just nothing, but suffereth Jesus to work in him what he pleaseth, he is humble. But this is very hard, and as it were impossible, and unreasonable (to a man that worketh all by humane reason, and seeth no further) for to do many good deeds, and then to \* attribute all to Jesus, and set himselfe at nought. But who so can have a spirituall sight of the truth, he shall thinke it full true, and full reasonable to doe so.

\* *Arrete.*

\* Swink &  
sweat.

And verily he that hath this fight shall do never the lesse, but shall be stirred up to travell corporally and spiritually, much the more, and with a better will. And this may be one cause, why some men peradventure \* labour and travel, and pine their wretched bodies with outrageous penance all their life time, and are ever saying Prayers and Psalms, and many beads, and yet cannot come to the spirituall feeling of the love of God, as it seems some do in short time, with lesse paines, for they have not that humility I spake of.

Also on the other side I say; he that useth not his industry, but thinketh thus with himselfe, to what end should I take paines? Why should I pray, or meditate, or watch, or fast, or do any other bodily penance, to attaine to such grace, seeing it cannot be gotten or had but onely by the free gift of Jesus; Therefore I will continue in my sensuality, as I am, and doe even nothing of any such corporall or spirituall workes; but expect till he give it, for if he be pleased to give it, he asketh no working of me, how much soever, or how little I do, I shall have it: And if he be pleased not to give it, labour I never so hard, I shall get it never the sooner. He that saith thus, shall never come to this reforming, for he draweth himselfe wilfully to idlenesse of the flesh, and disinableth himselfe for the receiving of the gift of grace, in as much as he layeth aside, and putteth from him both inward working, which consisteth in a lasting desire and longing after Jesus, and outward working, by exercising his body in outward deeds, so that he shall never receive the said grace.

Therefore I say, that he that hath not true humility, nor is very serious and diligent, either onely in internal exercises and continual desire towards God by prayer, and devout affections and thoughts of him, or else both inward and outward, he cannot come to this spiritual forming of his image.

CHAP. III.

*An entry or good beginning of a spirituall journey, shewing how a soule should behave her selfe in intending and working, that will come to this reforming, by example of a pilgrim going to Jerusalem.*

NEverthelesse for that thou covetest to know some manner of working, by which thou mayest the sooner attaine to this reforming, I shall shew thee, as well as I can, the shortest and readiest helpe that I know in this working. And how that may be, I shall tell thee by an example of a good pilgrime, in this wise. There was a man that would go to *Hierusalem*, and because he knew not the way, he came to another man, who he believed knew the way thither better, and asked him, whether he might come to that City; who answered, that he could not come thither without great paines and travell, for the way is long and perilous, and full of great Thieves and Robbers; and many other hinderances there be that befall a man in his going, and also there be many severall wayes, as it seemeth, leading thitherward; And many men travelling thitherward are oftentimes killed or robbed, and so may not come to that place which they desire. Neverthelesse there is one way, the which whosoever taketh and holdeth to it, I will undertake (saith he) he shall come to that City of *Hierusalem*, and shall never lose his life, nor be slaine, nor dye by default, though he should oft be robbed, and well beaten, and suffer much pain in the going, yet his life shall be safe. Then said the pilgrime, so I may have my life saved, and come to that place that I covet, I care not what mischief I suffer in going: And therefore tell and advise me, what you thinke necessary, and I promise you on a certainty, that I will follow your counsell.

*The shortest and readiest way to attaine hereto.*

\* Sere.



## The Scale of Perfection.

That other man answered and said thus ; Loe , I set thee in the right way : this is the way and see that thou bear in mind that which I tell thee : Whatsoever thou seest, hearest or feelest, that would stay or hinder thee in the way, stick not at it, willingly consent not to it, abide not with it, behold it not, like it not, fear it not, but still go forward holding on thy way, and ever think and say with thy selfe, that thou fain wouldest be at *Hierusalem*, for that thou covetest, and that thou desirest ; and nought else but that, and if men rob thee, and spoile thee, beat thee, scorne thee, despise thee, do not thou strive against such their doings, if thou mean to have thy life safe, but be content with the harme thou receivest, and hold on thy way, as if all that were nothing, least thou receive more harme. Also if men would seek to stay thee by telling tales and seed thee with lyes or conceits. to draw thee to merriment, and to forsake or prolong thy pilgrimage, give them a deafe eare, and answer them not againe, and say nought else but that thou wouldest faine be at *Hierusalem*. And if men proffer thee gifts, and would make thee rich with worldly goods, listen not to them, but think ever on *Hierusalem*. And if thou wilt hold this course, and do that which I have said, I will undertake for thy life, that thou shalt not be slain, but that thou shalt come to that place that thou desirest.

Now to apply this spiritually to our purpose ; *Hierusalem* is as much as to say, a *sight of peace* : and be-tokeneth contemplation in perfect love of God ; for contemplation is nothing else but a sight of God which is very peace. Then if thou covet to come to this blessed sight of very peace, and be a true pilgrime towards *Hierusalem*, though it be so that I was never there, *Neverthelesse* as far forth as I can, I shall set thee in the way towards it.

The beginning of the high way, in which thou shalt go, is reforming in faith, grounded humbly on the faith and on the Lawes of holy Church, as I have said before : for trust assuredly, though you have sinned  
here

heretofore, if you be now reformed by the Sacrament of penance, after the law of holy Church, that thou art in the right way. Now then, since thou art in the safe way, if thou wilt speed in thy going, and make a good journey, it behooveth thee to hold these two things often in thy mind; Humility, and Love; and often say to thy selfe, *I am nothing, I have nothing, I covet nothing, but one.* Thou shalt have the meaning of these words in thine intent, and in the habit of thy soule perpetually, though thou have them not allwayes expressly in thy thought (for that is not necessary.) Humility saith, *I am nothing, I have nothing*, Love saith, *I covet nothing but one*, and that is, Jesus. These two stirrings well fastned, with the minding of Jesus make good musick in the harpe of the soule, when they be cunningly struck upon with the finger of reason; for the lower thou smitest upon the one, the higher soundeth the other. The lesse thou feelest that thou art, or that thou hast of thy selfe, through Humility, the more thou covetest for to have of Jesus, through desire of love. I meane not onely that Humility, which a soule feeleth by the sight and sense of his own sin, for frailnesse and wretchednesse of this life, or of the wretchednesse of his Neighbour, for though this kinde of Humility be true and wholesome; Neverthelesse it is boysterous, and fleshly, in comparison of that other, not so clean, nor soft, nor lovely. I meane that Humility, which a soule feeleth through grace, in the sight and beholding of the endless being, and the wonderfull goodness of Jesus; and if thou canst not see it with thy spiritual eye, yet that thou believe it: for through this sight of his being, either in full faith or in feeling, thou shalt esteeme thy selfe not onely the most wretched creature that is, but also as nothing in the substance of thy soule though thou hadst never done any sin. And this is lovely Humility; for in respect of Jesus (who is truly All) thou art just nothing, and so must thou think that thou hast  
just

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just nothing, but art as a vessell that standeth ever empty, and as if nothing were therein, as of it selfe; for do thou never so many good deeds outward or inward, untill thou have and feel that thou hast the love of Jesus, thou hast just nothing: For with that precious liquor onely may thy soule be filled, and with none other. And forasmuch as that thing alone is so precious and noble, therefore what ever else thou hast, or what thou dost, hold and esteem it as nothing, as to rest in, without the sight and the love of Jesus. Cast it all behind thee, and forget it, that thou mayest have this, which is the best of all. Just as a true pilgrime, going towards *Hierusalem*, leaveth behind him house and land, wife and children, and maketh himselfe poore and bare from all things that he hath, that he may go lightly without letting; Right so, if thou wilt be a spirituall pilgrime, thou shalt strip thy selfe naked of all that thou hast, that are either good deeds or bad, and cast them all behinde thee, that thou be so poor in thy owne feeling, that there be nothing of thy owne working that thou wilt restingly leane on; but ever desiring more grace and love, and ever seeking the spirituall presence of Jesus. And if thou dost thus, then shalt thou resolve in thy heart fully, and wholly, that thou wilt be at *Hierusalem*, and at no other place but there; that is, thou shalt purpose in thy heart wholly and fully, that thou wilt nothing have but the love of Jesus, and the spirituall sight of him, in such manner as he shall please to shew himselfe; for to that end onely art thou made and redeemed, and he it is that is thy beginning, and thy end, thy joy, and thy blisse. And therefore whatsoever thou hast, be thou never so rich in other deeds spirituall or corporall (unlesse thou have this love that I speak of, and know and feele that thou hast it) hold and esteem that thou hast right nothing. Imprint this well in the desire of thy soule, and cleave fast thereto, and it shall save thee from all perils in thy going, that thou shalt never perish, and it shall save thee from the Thieves and Robbers which I call  
unc lean

uncleane spirits, that though they spoyle thee and beate thee by diuerse temptations, thy life shall ever be safe; and in brief, if thou keep it, as I have said, thou shalt escape all perils and mischiefs, and come to the City *Hierusalem* in a short time.

Now then, since thou art in the way, and knowest the name of the place, and whither thou tendest, begin therefore to go thy journey. Thy setting forth is nought else but spirituall working, and bodily also, when there is need, which thou shalt use according to discretion in this wise. What worke soever it is that thou shalt do (according to thy degree and the estate thou art in) corporally or spiritually, if it helpe and further this gracious desire that thou hast, to love Jesus, and make it more whole, more easie, and more mighty to all vertues, and to all goodnesse, that worke I hold the best, be it preaching, be it meditating, reading, or working, and as long as that worke strengtheneth most thy heart, and thy will, to the love of Jesus, and draweth thy affections and thy thoughts furthest off from worldly vanities, it is good to use it; and if so be, that through use, the savour or good taste thereof groweth lesse, and thou thinkest of some other worke that favoureth more, and thou feelest more grace in that other, take the other, and leave that; For though thy desire and the yerning of thy heart to Jesus ought ever to be unchangeable, nevertheless thy spirituall workes that thou art to use, in praying or thinking, for the feeding and nourishing thy desire, may be diuerse, and may well be changed, after that thou feelest thy selfe disposed, through grace, severally to apply thy heart to them; for it fareth with works and this desire as it doth with sticks and a fire, for the more sticks are layd to the fire, the greater is the fire. Right so, the more several spiritual workes that a man hath in his designe, to keep entire this desire, the mightier and more burning shall his desire be to God.

And therefore consider wisely what worke thou canst best do, and which most helpeth to keep whole this



this desire of Jesus ( if so be thou be free, and not bound by any Obligation ) and that do. Binde not thy selfe to voluntary customes unchangeably, which may hinder the liberty of thy heart to correspond or answer the motion or invitation of Jesus ; If his grace at any time should specially visite thee. And I shall tell thee what customes are ever good and necessary to be kept, that is, such as consist in the getting of vertues, and in hindering or resisting of sinne, such customes should never be left ; for thou shouldst ever be humble, patient, sober, and chaste, if thou do as thou shouldst. But the customes of other things, if they hinder a better good, are good to be layd aside, giving place to that which would be better for us. As thus, if a man have a custome to say so many beads or prayers, or to meditate of such or such a subject, for so long a time, or to watch, or kneele thus long, or any other such bodily deed, these customes are to be left sometimes when reasonable cause requireth, or when more grace cometh otherwise, or in some other exercise.

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#### C H A P. IV.

*Of certaine Temptations and Lettings which soules feele from their spirituall enemies, in their spirituall knowing and going towards Jerusalem, and the remedies against them.*

**N**OW that thou art in the way, and knowest how thou shouldst goe, beware of thy enemies, that will be busie to let thee if they can. For their intent is, to put out of thy heart that desire, and that longing that thou hast to the love of JESUS, and to drive thee home againe to the love of worldly vanities ; for that nothing grieveth them so much as this desire. These enemies are principally fleshly desires, and vaine feares, which rise out of thy heart,

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heart, through the corruption of thy fleshly nature, and would hinder thy desire of the love of God, that they may fully and peaceably possesse thy heart: These are thy neereſt enemies. Also other enemies there are, as Unclean spirits, which are busie with sleights and wiles to deceive thee. But one remedy haſt thou, which I mentioned before, and that is, that whatſoever they ſay believe them not, but hold on thy way, and onely desire the love of Jeſus. Answer them ever on this wiſe, *I am nothing, I have nothing, I covet nothing but onely the love of our Lord* **J E S U S.**

If thy enemies by ſuggeſtions in thy ſoule, ſay unto thee, that thou haſt not made thy Confeſſion aright, or that there is ſome old former ſinne hidd in thy heart, that thou knoweſt not, nor never madeſt thy confeſſion aright of it; and therefore thou muſt turne home againe, and leave off thy deſire, and go confeſſe thy ſelfe better; Believe not this ſaying, for it is falſe, for thou art rightly confeſſed. and ſo doe thou ſurely hope and truſt; and that thou art in the right way, and that thou needeſt no further to ranſack thy ſoule for confeſſion of that which is paſt: hold on thy way, and think only on *Hieruſalem.*

Also if they ſay, that thou art not worthy to have the love of God, and therefore why ſhouldeſt thou covet that which thou wilt not be able to attain, nor art not worthy of; Believe them not, but goe on, and ſay thus; *Not becauſe I am worthy, but becauſe I am unworthy, therefore would I love G O D; for if I had his love, that would make me worthy: and ſince I was created to that end, though I ſhould never have it, yet will I covet it, and therefore will I pray, and thinke that I may get it.* And then if thy enemies ſee that thou beſinneſt to waxe bold, and well-willed to thy worke, they will begin to be aſraid of thee, yet will they not ceaſe to ſeeke to ſtay and hinder thee, as much as they can, as long as thou art going in the way, what with affrighting and threatning thee on one ſide, and what with flattering and vain pleaſing thee on

*The firſt temptation.*

*The ſecond temptation.*

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*The third  
temptation.*

on the other side, to make thee breake thy purpose, and turne home againe. And they will say thus; If thou hold on thus thy desire to Jesus, travelling so fervently as thou now beginnest, thou wilt fall into bodily sicknesse, or thou wilt craze thy head and fall into fancies or melancholly, as thou seest some doe; or thou wilt fall into poverty, or bodily mischief, and none will be able to helpe thee, or thou wilt fall into secret temptations and illusions of the Devill, that thou shalt not be able to helpe thy selfe; for it is very dangerous for any man to give himselfe over to the love of God, and leave all the world, and covet nothing but onely the love of him: For that many perils may fall out that a man knows not of, and therefore turne home againe, and leave off this desire, for thou shalt never bring it to passe, and do as other worldly men do.

*The fourth  
temptation.*

Thus will thy enemies say, but believe them not, but hold on thy desire, and say nought else; but that thou wouldst have Jesus, and be at Jerusalem; and if they perceive that thy will is so strong, that thou wilt not give over, neither for feare of sinne, nor of sicknesse, for fancies nor for frenzies, for doubts nor for dreads of spiritual temptations, for mischiefs nor for poverty, for life nor for death, but ever seekest and longest after one thing, and nothing else but that one thing, and turnest a deaf eare to them, as though thou heardst them not, and holdest thee on stiffly and constantly in thy course of prayer, and in thy other spirituall exercises without stinting, but yet with discretion after the counsell and directions of thy Superiour, or of thy ghostly Father, then begin they to be wroth, and to come a little neerer to thee. Then they begin to rob thee & beat thee and do thee all the shame that they can, and that is, when they make that all the deeds that thou dost, be they never so well done, are judged by others to be evill, and turned into the worse part. And whatsoever thou wouldst do, or have done, for the helpe or comfort of thy body or soule, it shall be letted or hindered by other men, so that thou shalt be



be put from thy will in every thing which thou reasonably desirest. And all this they do, that thou mayest be stirred up to anger, or melancholly, or evill will against thy neighbour. But, against all these diseases, and all other that thou mayest feele, use this remedy. Take Jesus into thy minde, and trouble not thy selfe with them, nor be angry, tarry not with them, but thinke on thy Lesson; *That thou art nothing, that thou hast nothing, that thou canst nothing loose of earthly goods, that thou covetest nothing but the love of Jesus*; and hold on thy way, with thy exercises, to Jerusalem. And though thou be sometime tarried and letted in thy way; through thy frailty, with such \*inconveniences as befall thy bodily life, through evill will of man, or malice of the enemy; as soone as thou canst, come againe to thy selfe, leave off the thinking of thy inconveniences, and go on with thy exercise. Abide not long upon the thinking of those thy defects for fear of thy enemies.

\* *inconveniences.*

And after this, when they see that thou art so well willed, that thou art not angry, nor heavy, nor wroth, nor much moved against any creature, for ought that they can do or say against thee, but setteest thy heart fully to suffer all that may fall, ease or unease, praise or dispraise, and that thou dost esteem or regard nothing, so that thou mayest keepe thy thought and thy desire whole to the love of God, then are they much abashed. But then will they set upon thee with flattering and vaine pleasing; and that is, when they set before thee all thy good deeds and virtues, and tell thee that all men praise thee, and speak well of thy holinesse, and how all men love thee, and worship thee for thy holy living. Thus will thy enemies do, that thou mayest believe them, and take delight in this vaine joy, and rest therein: But if thou do well, thou shalt esteem all such janglings and suggestions to be false flatterings of thy enemy, that profereth thee to drinke venome tempered with honey, and therefore refuse it, and say, *thou wilt have none of it, but thou wouldst be at Jerusalem*:

*The fifth temptation.*

Such



Such lettings shalt thou feele, or the like, what from thy flesh, and what from the world, and what of the Fiend, more then I can rehearse. Now for as long as a man suffereth his thoughts willingly to run about the world in beholding of sundry things, he perceiveth few lettings; But as soon as he draweth all his thoughts and his yearnings to one thing onely, to have it, to know it, and to love it, which is Jesus; then shall he feele many painful lettings; for whatsoever thing he seeleth which is not that which he coveteth, that same thing is a letting to him; Therefore I have set downe some of them for examples in particular; And moreover in generall, I shall now tell thee, that whatsoever stirring thou seelest of the flesh, or of the Fiend, either pleasant or painfull, bitter or sweet, lovely or dreadful, glad some or sorrowful, that would draw downe thy thoughts or thy desires from the love of Jesus to worldly vanities, and would hinder or cool thy spirituall coveteousnesse that thou hast to the love of him, and would have thy heart to be occupied with that stirring and rest upon it, set it at nought, entertaine it not willingly, tarry not therewith too long. But if it be any worldly thing that is necessary to be done, for thy selfe, or thy Neighbour, dispatch it, and quit thee soon of it, and bring it to an end, that it hang not on thy heart. But if it be another thing that may be spared, and is not very needfull, or else concerns thee not, heed it not, jangle or dally not therewith, nor trouble or vexe thy selfe about it, feare it not, like it not, but cast it out of thy heart speedily, and say thus; *I am nothing, I have nothing, I seeke nor covet nothing, but the love of Jesus.* Fasten thy thoughts to this desire, and strengthen it, and maintaine it by prayer and other spirituall exercises, that thou forget it not, and it shall lead thee in the right way and save thee from all dangers; that though thou feele them, thou shalt not perish, and I hope that it shall bring thee to the perfect love of our Lord Jesus.

Nevertheless on the other side, I say also, what worke

work or what stirring it is that may help, or strengthen, or nourish thy desire, and draw thy thoughts farthest from lust and the minding of the world, more entire and more burning to the love of God, whether it be praying, meditating, reading or hearing, solitar nesse, or being in company, silence, or talking, going, or sitting, hold to it for the time, and exercise thy selfe therein as long as any favour or relish therein lasteth. If it be so that thou take therewith meat and drinke and sleepe, as a pilgrime doth, and use discretion in thy exercises, after the advice and directions of thy superiour: For a pilgrime, though he be in never so great hast in his journey, yet will he eate and drink and sleep. Do thou likewise: and though it hinder and stay thee at one time, it shall further thee at another time.

## C H A P V.

*Of an evill day and a good night, and what they mean,  
and how the love of the world is likened to an evill  
Day, and the love of God to a good Night.*

**I**F thou wouldst know then what this desire is, verily it is Iesus, for he worketh this desire in thee, and giveth it thee; and he it is that desireth in thee, and he it is that is desired, he is all, and he doth all, if thou couldst see him. Thou dost nothing but sufferest him to work in thy soul, & assentest to him with great gladnesse of heart, that he will vouchsafe to do so in thee. Thou art nothing else but a reasonable instrument by which, and in which he worketh, and therefore when thou feelest thy thoughts through the touching of grace taken up with the desire of Iesus, with a mighty devout will for to please him; and love him; then thinke that thou hast Iesus, for he it is that thou desirest. Behold him well, for he goeth before thee, not in bodily shape, but insensibly, by secret presence of his power. There-

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fore

Psal. 43.

Isa. 26.

Job 3.

Therefore see him spiritually, if thou canst, and fasten all thy thoughts and affections to him, and follow him wheresoever he goeth ; for he will lead thee the right way to *Jerusalem*, that is, to the sight of peace and Contemplation. Thus prayed the Prophet to the Father of heaven, saying, *Send out thy light and thy truth (that is thy Son Jesus) and he shall lead me (by desire in me) to thy holy hill and to thy tabernacles ;* That is, to the feeling of perfect love and height of *Contemplation*.

Of this desire the Prophet *Esay* speaketh thus, *Memoriale tuum*, &c. Lord Jesus, the remembrance of thee is imprinted in the desire of my soul, for my soule hath desired thee in the night, and my spirit hath coveted thee in all its thoughts. The Prophet saith, he desired God all in the night, being a space betwixt two dayes; for when one day is ended, another day beginneth not presently, but first cometh night, which parteth the dayes, being sometimes long and sometimes short, and then after that cometh another day. The Prophet meaneth not onely of this manner of night, but he meaneth a spiritual night. Thou shalt understand that there be two dayes, or two lights ; The first is a false light, the second a true light ; The false light is the love of this world, which a man hath in himselfe through the corruption of nature ; The true light is the perfect love of Jesus felt through grace in a mans soule. The love of this world is a false light, for it passeth away and lasteth not, and so it performeth not that which it promiseth. This light did the enemy promise to *Adam* when he stirred him to sinne, and said thus, *Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods*. And therein he said truth ; for when *Adam* had sinned, forth-with his inner eye was shut, and spiritual light withdrawn, and his outward eye was opened, and he felt and saw a new light of fleshly liking and worldly love, which he saw not before. And so saw he a new day, but this was an evill day for this was it that *Job* cursed, when he said thus ; *Let the day perish wherein I was borne*. He cursed not the day running on in the yeare which God made, but he cursed this day which man made, that is, the

the concupiscence and the love of this world, in the which he was born, though he felt it not. That day and that light he asked of God that it might perish and last no longer. But the everlasting love of Jesus is a true day and a blessed light; for God is both love and light, and he is everlasting, as St. John saith; *He that loveth God dwelleth in the light.* And now, what man perceiveth and seeth the love of this world to be false and failing, and therefore will forsake it, and seek the love of Jesus, yet may he not for all that presently feeble the love of him, but he must abide a while in the night, for he cannot suddenly come from that one light to that other, that is, from the love of the world to perfect love of God. This night is nought else but a forbearing and a with-drawing of the thought and of the soul from earthly things by great desire and yearning for to love and see and feel Jesus and spiritual things. This is the night; for even as the night is darke, and doth hide all bodily things, and a time of ceasing from all bodily works: Even so a man that setteth himselfe fully to think on Jesus, and to desire onely the love of him, is carefull to hide his thoughts from vain beholding and perceiving, and his affections from fleshly liking and loving of all bodily creatures, whereby his thoughts may become free, and not be subject, nor his affections bound or pinned to, or troubled with any thing lower, or worse then himselfe. And if he come to this passe, then is it night with him, for then he is in darknesse: But this is a good night, and a light darknesse, for it is a stopping out of the false love of this world, and it is an approaching of the true day. And verily the darker that this night is, the neerer is the true day of the love of Jesus; for the more that a soule can, through longing after God, be hid from the noise and stirrings of fleshly affections, & unclean thoughts, the neerer is she to feel the light of the love of him, for it is even at her. Thus seemeth the Prophet to meane, when he saith; *When I sit in darknesse our Lord is my light.* That is, when my soule is hid from all stirrings of sinne as it were in sleep, then is our Lord my light,

1 John 2.

\* Dinne.



\* *Homeli-  
ness.*

\* *Charge*

for then approacheth he by his grace to shew me his light, neverthelesse this night is some-time painful, As first, when a man is very foule, and is not used through grace to be often in this darknesse, but would faine have it, and be in it, and therefore he setteth his thoughts and his desires to God-ward as much as he can, he would not feele nor thinke but onely of him, and because he cannot easily have it, therefore it is painfull for the custome and \* familiarity that he hath formerly had with the sins of the world, and of fleshly affections, and earthly things; and his daily fleshly deeds presse so upon him, and continually strike in, and through force draw down the soule to them, that he cannot well be hid from them so soone as he would. Therefore this darknesse is painefull to him, and especially when grace toucheth him not abundantly, instilling some extraordinary devotion into him. Neverthelesse if it be so with thee, be not too sad or heavy for it, nor strive much as though thou wouldst by force drive them out of thy thoughts, for thou canst not do so; but do thou rather expect grace, suffer quietly, and force not thy selfe too much: But filily (if thou canst) draw thy desire and spiritual eye to J E S U S, as if thou didst not \* care for them. For be thou assured, when thou wouldst desire Jesus, and thinke onely of him, and thou art not able freely to do so, for the pressing in of such worldly thoughts, thou art certainly coming out of the false day, and art entring into this darknesse. But thy darknesse is not restfull, not quiet to thee by reason of thy uncleannesse and unacquaintednesse with it, and therefore use it often, and in processe of time through feeling of grace, it will be more easie, and more restfull to thee, and that is, when thy soule through grace is made so free, and so able, and so good, and so gathered into it selfe, that it listeth to thinke on just nothing, then is it in a good darknesse. This Nothing I meane thus, that a soule may through grace be gathered into it selfe freely and wholly, and not

not be driven against its will, nor drawn downe by force for to thinke, or like, or love, with cleaving of affection to any sinne, or any earthly thing vainely, then thinketh the soule just nought, for then it thinketh of no earthly thing cleavingly. This is a rich nought, and this nought and this night is a great ease to the soule that desireth the love of J E S U S, it is in ease as to the thoughts of any earthly thing, neverthelesse it is full busie to thinke on him.

What thing then maketh this darknesse? Verily nought else but a gracious desire to have the love of J E S U S, for that desire and that longing that it hath at that time to the love of G O D, for to see him, and have him, driveth out of the heart all worldly vanities, and fleshly affections, and gathereth the soule into it selfe, and busieth it onely in thinking how it may come to the love of him. And at that time thee may freely and devoutly behold J E S U S, whether she would pray or meditate, and so it bringeth her to this right Nothing; and verily it is not altogether darke nor nothing, when it thinketh thus; for though it be darke from false light, it is not altogether darke from the true light: For J E S U S, that is both love and light is in this darknesse, whether it be painfull or restful. If it be painefull, then is J E S U S in the soule, as travelling in the desire and longing after light, but he is not yet as resting in love, nor as shewing his light. And therefore it is called night and darknesse, in as much as the soule is hidde from the false light of the World, and hath not yet a full feeling of true light, but is in expecting of that blessed love of G O D which it desireth.

Therefore if thou wouldst know when thou art in this secure darknesse, and when not, thou mayest try it thus, and seeke no further. When thou feelest thy intent and thy will fully set for to desire God, and thinke onely on him, thou mayest as

it were at first aske thy selfe in thy own thoughts whether thou covetest to have any thing of this life for love of the thing it selfe, or for to have the using of any of thy bodily senses in any creature. And then if thy eye answer thee thus; *I would see just nothing*; And thy mouth, *I would savour just nothing*; And thine eare, *I would heare just nothing*; And thy body, *I would feele just nothing*. And after that thy heart say, *I would thinke just nothing of earthly things, nor of bodily deeds, nor would have my affections fastned fleshly to any creature but onely in God, and to God-wards if I could*. And when they all answer thus to thee, and do it full readily, being touched by grace, then art thou entred some-what into this darknesse; For though withall thou feel and perceive within thee the

\* *Glennings*. \* presentations and profferings of vaine thoughts, and pressing in of fleshly affections; Neverthelesse thou art in this profitable darknesse, if it be so that thy thoughts be not fixed to them; for such vain imaginations that fall into the heart unadvisedly, they trouble indeed this darknesse, and some-what \* molest the soule because it would be hid from them, but cannot, but they do not take away the profit of this darknesse, for the soule shall by this meanes in time

\* *Pine*. come to restfull \* darknesse. And then is this darknesse restfull when the soule is hid for a time from the painefull feeling of all such vaine thoughts, and is rested onely in the desire and longing after Jesus, with a spirituall beholding of him, as it shall be said hereafter; but this lasteth whole and entire but a short time: Yet though it be but for a short time, yet it is full profitable.

## CHAP. VI.

*How that the desire of Jesus felt in this lightsome darknesse slayeth all motions of sinne, and inableth the soule to perceive spirituall lighnings from the heavenly Hierusalem, that is Jesu.*

SEeing then this darknesse and this night consisting sonely in the desire and longing after the love of Jesus with a blinde thinking on him, is so good and so restful, though it be but short: how good then, and how blessed is it to feel his love, and to be illuminated with his blessed invisable light thereby to see the truth, the which light a soule receiveth when the night passeth, and the day springeth.

This I conceive was the night that the Prophet meant when he said, *My soule hath desired thee in the night*, as I have said before. It is much better to be hid in this darke night from beholding of the world, though it were painfull, then to be out in false liking of this world, which seemeth so shining and so comfortable to them that are blind in the knowledge of spiritual light; for when thou art in this darknesse, thou art much neerer *Hierusalem*, then when thou art in the midst of the false light. Therefore apply thy heart fully to the stirrings of grace, and use thy selfe to dwell in this darknesse, and by often assaying to be acquainted therewith, and it shall soon be made restfull to thee, and the true light of spiritual knowing shall spring up to thee not all at once, but secretly by little and little, as the Prophet saith; *To them that dwell in the countrey of the shadow of death, light is sprung up.* That is, light of grace springeth, and shall spring to all them that can dwell in the shadow of death that is in this darknesse which is like to death; for as death slayeth a living body and all its fleshly senses, right so the desire of the love of Jesus felt in this

*\*Claude fē  
nestras ut  
luceat do-  
mus.*

*\*Woon.*

*Isa. 9.*

*\*Wonne.*



Ezek. 40.

darknesse slayeth all finnes, all fleshly affections, and all uncleane thoughts for the time, and then dost thou hasten to draw neere to *Hierusalem*. Thou art not there yet, but by some small sudden lightnings that glide out of small caves from that City, shalt thou be able to see it as farre off ere thou come to it; for know thou well, though that thy soule be in this restfull darknesse without the trouble of worldly vanities, it is not yet cloathed all in light, nor turned all into the fire of love. But it perceiveth full well that there is some-what above it selfe that it knoweth not, nor hath not yet, but would have it, and burningly yearneth after it, and that is nought else but the sight of *Hierusalem* outwardly, which is like to a City which the Prophet *EZEKIEL* saw in his Visions. He saith that he saw a City upon an hill toward the South, that to his sight when it was measured was no more in length and breadth then a reed, that is sixe cubits and a palme of length: But as soon as he was brought into the City, and looked about him, then he saw that it was wondrous great, for he saw many Halls and Chambers both open and secret, he saw Gates and Porches without and within, and many more buildings then I now speake of, and it was in length and breadth many hundred cubits, that it seemed a wonder to him that this City was so long and so large within, that seemed so little to his sight when he was without.

This City betokeneth the perfect love of God set upon the hill of *CONTEMPLATION*, which to the sight of a soule that without the feeling of it travellet in desire towards it seemeth some-what, but it seemeth but a little thing, no more then a Rood, that is sixe cubits and a palme of length. By sixe cubits are understood the perfection of mans worke; and by the palme a little touch of *CONTEMPLATION*. He seeth well that there is such a thing that passeth the deservings of

of all the workings of man like as a palme is surpassed by six Cubits, but he seeth not within what it is, yet if he can come within the City of Contemplation, then seeth he much more then he saw at first.

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## CHAP. VII.

*How a man shall know false Illuminations that are feigned by the Enemy from the true light of knowing that cometh out of Jesus, and by what tokens.*

**B**UT now beware of the midday fiend that seigneth blight as if it came out of *Hierusalem* and is not so: for the fiend seeth that our Lord Jesus sheweth light to his lovers of truth; therefore for the deceiving of them that are unwise he sheweth a light that is not true under colour of a true light and cozeneth them. Neverthelesse how a soul may know the true light when it shineth from God, and when it is feigned by the Enemy, shall I declare (as me thinketh) by an example of the Firmament.

Sometime the Firmament sheweth a light from the Sun, which seemeth to be the Sun and is not; And sometime sheweth the true Sun truely. To know the one from the other is thus; The feigned Sun sheweth himself onely betwixt two black rainy Clouds; and then because the Sun is neer, there shineth out from the Cloudes a light as if it were a Sun, but is not. But the true Sun sheweth it selfe when the Firmament is clear or much cleared from black Clouds. Now to our purpose; Some men, as it seems, forsake the love of the world and would come to the love of God, and to the light of understanding him, but they would not come through that darknesse which I spake of before: They will not know themselves truly and humbly what they have been heretofore, or what they are yet through sin, nor how naught they are in their nature against God

God : They are not busie to enter into themselves, all other outward things being left, and flee all wicked stirrings that rise in their hearts of Pride, Envy, Anger, or other sins through a lasting desire to Jesus in praying and meditating, in silence, and in weeping, and in other corporall and spirituall exercises as devout and holy men have done. But as soon as they have forsaken the world, as it were outwardly in appearance, or else soon after, they imagine that they are holy and ble to have the spirituall understanding of the Gospel and of holy Writ, and namely if they can literally fulfill the commandments of God and keep themselves from corporall sins, then they imagine that they love God perfectly : And therefore they will presently preach and teach all other men, as if they had received grace of understanding in perfection of charity through speciall gift of the holy Ghost : And also they are much more stirred forasmuch as they feel sometimes much knowledge as it were suddainly given to them without great study before had, and also much fervour of love as it seemeth for to preach truth and righteousness to their Neighbour : Therefore they hold it as a grace of God that visiteth them with his blessed light above other soules. Nevertheless if they will look well about them, they shall find that this light of knowledge and that fervour which they feel cometh not from the true Sun, which is our Lord Jesus, but cometh from the midday fiend that feigneth light, and likeneth him to the Sun, and therefore shall he be known by the foresaid example.

Light of knowledge, that is feigned by the fiend to a dark soul, is shewed betwixt two black rainy Clouds ; Whereof the upper Cloud is presumption and exalting of himselfe, and the lower Cloud is the down-putting and disdain of his Neighbour : Then whatsoever light of knowing or feeling of fervour it be that shineth to a soule with presumption and \* exalting of it selfe, and disdain of his Neighbour felt at the same time, it is not the light of grace given of the holy Ghost ; although (the knowledge in it

\* *Highting.*

selfe

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self be true) but it is either from the fiend, if it come suddainly, or else from a mans own wit if it come by study, and so it may easily be known that this feigned light of knowing is not the light of the true Sun.

Therefore they that have this knowing on this manner are full of spirituall pride, and see it not; they are so blind with this feigned light that they hold the exalting of their own heart and their disobedience to the Lawes of holy Church as it were perfect humility to the Gospell and to the Lawes of God: and imagine that the following of their own will to be freedome of spirit. And thereupon they begin to rain like black Cloudes waters of errorrs and heresies; for the words that they utter in preaching, tend all to back-biting, and to strife and discord, reproving of States and of Persons: and yet they say that all this is charity and zeale of the truth. But it is not so;

for Saint James the Apostle saith thus, *Ubi zelus est & contentio*, &c. Where Envy is and \* contention, there is

unstablenesse and every evill work. And therefore that knowledge that bringeth forth such sins cometh not from the father of lighis, that is God, but is earthly, beastly and devillish. And so by these tokens, viz.

pride, presumption, disobedience, indignation, back-biting, and other such sins (for these follow after)

may the feigned light be known from the true: for the true Sun shineth not nor breaketh forth by speciall visitation to give light of understanding or perfect charity to a soul, unlesse the Firmament be first made bright and clear from Cloudes, that is, unlesse the conscience be made clean through the fire of burning desire to Jesus in this darknesse which wasteth and burneth up all wicked stirrings of pride, vain glory, wrath, envy, and all other sins in the soul. As the

Prophet saith, *Ignis ante ipsum procedet*, &c. A fire shall go before him, that is desire of love shall goe before Jesus in mans soul, and it shall burn all his enemies; that is, it shall waste all sins. For except a soul be first smitten down from the height of it self by fear and humility, and be well tryed & burnt in this fire of

Jam. 3.  
\* Slighting

Psal. 90.

desire,



desire, and as it were purified from all spiritual filth, through long time in devout prayers and other spiritual exercises, it is not able to beare the shinings of spirituall light, nor to receive the precious liquor of perfect love of Jesus: But when it is purified and made subtle through this fire, then may it receive the gracious light of spiritual knowing, and the perfection of love, which is the true Sun

Thus saith holy Writ, *Vobis qui timetis Deum*, &c. *The true Sun of Righteousnesse*, that is our Lord Jesus, shall spring to you that feare him; that is, to humble soules that humble themselves to their Neighbor, through knowing of their owne wretchednesse, and cast themselves downe under God by annihilating themselves in their owne substance through reverent feare and spiritual beholding of him lastingly, for that is perfect humility. Unto these soules the true Sunne shall spring, and enlighten their reason to the knowing of Truth, and kindle their affections in the fervour of love, and then shall they both burne and shine, *viz.* burne in perfect love through the vertue of this heavenly Sun, and shine in the knowledge of God and spirituall things, for then be they reformed in feeling.

Therefore he that would not be deceived, I thinke it is good for him to draw downe himselfe, and hide himselfe in this darknesse: First, from intermedling with other men, as I have said, and forget all the world if he can; and follow Jesus with constant desire offered up in prayers and meditating on him. And then I believe the light that cometh after this darknesse is secure, & true, and that it shineth out of the City of *Jerusalem* from the true Sun to a soule that travelleth in darknesse, and cryeth after light for \* to shew her the right way, and comfort her in travell. For I believe that after true darknesse going before feigned light never cometh; That is, if a man truly and fully set himselfe to forsake the love of the world, and can through grace come to the feeling and knowing of himselfe, and hold himselfe humbly in that feeling, he

\* To wys-  
sin it the  
way.

he shall not be deceived with any errors, nor heresies, nor fancies; for all these come in by the gate of pride. If then pride can be stopped out, there shall no such sin rest in a soule, and though they come and proffer themselves, they shall not enter; for grace which the soule feeleth in this humble darknesse, shall teach the soule truth, and shew it that all such profferings are from the enemy.

## CHAP. VIII.

*How great profit it is to the soule to be brought through grace into lightsome darknesse, and how a man shall dispose himselfe if he will come thereto.*

There be many devout soules that through grace come into this darknesse, and feele the knowledg of themselves, and yet know they not fully what it is, and that ignorance is partly a hinderance to them. They feel well often their thoughts and their affections drawn out, and separated from the minding of earthly things, and brought into great rest of a delectable softnesse, without painfull troubling of vaine thoughts, or of their bodily senses; and they feele that time so great a freedome of spirit, that they can thinke on Jesus peaceably, and offer up their Psalms and Prayers mightily, favourly, and sweetly o him, as long as frailty of bodily nature will suffer them. They understand well that this feeling is good, but they know not what it is. Therefore unto all such soules I say, as me-thinketh, that this manner of feeling, though it be but short, and but seldome, it is really this darknesse that I speake of. For it is a feeling of themselves first, and a rising above themselves through burning desire to the sight of JESUS: Or else, if I shall say more truly, this gracious feeling is a spirituall sight of JESUS: And if they can keepe themselves in that rest, or bring it

it through grace into a custome, so that they can lightly and freely have it when they list, and hold themselves in it, they shall never be overcome by temptation of the fiend, nor of the flesh, nor by errors, or heresies: for they are set in the gate of Contemplation, able and ready to receive the perfect love of Jesus. Therefore he that hath it, it is good that he know it humbly, keepe it tenderly, and pursue it fervently, that no creature let him utterly from it, but that he follow it when he may. And that he forget and set a nought all things that may put him from this; if so be he be at his owne liberty, and may do what he will without scandall or offence to his Neighbour. For I thinke that he cannot come to this rest lightly, unless he hath great plenty of grace, and set himselfe to follow the motions of grace, and that ought he to do; for grace would ever be free, namely from sinne and worldly businesse, and all other things that let the working of it though they are not sins.

Neverthelesse another soule that hath not yet received this plenty of Grace, if he desire to come to this spirituall knowing of Jesus, he must, as much as in him lyeth, enable himselfe to it, and put away all lettings that obstruct grace as much as he can: He must truly learn to dye to the world, and truly forsake the love of it. First, pride both spiritual and corporall, that he desire no worship, worldly knowledge, nor worldly craft, profits, nor riches, nor precious cloathing, nor worldly array, nor any thing by which he may be honoured above other men, he shall covet none of all these. But if they be put upon him, take them with feare, so that he be poore both outwardly and inwardly, or at least fully inwardly in his heart? And that he covet to be forgotten of the world, and men regard him no more though he be never so rich or so wise, then the poorest man living. Also that he suffereth not his heart to rest in the beholding of his owne deeds, or in his vertues, imagining that he doth better then another, in that he forsaketh the world, which others do not, and therefore he setteth

teeth well by himselfe. Also he must leave all risings of heart, and evill will of anger and envy against his Neighbour. And that he \* offend no man, nor \*Disease. anger him indiscreetly by word or deed; nor give any man occasion whereby he may reasonably be angered, or moved, so that he may be free from every man. And also that he forsake coveteousnesse, that he covet right nought of earthly goods, but onely crave his bodily sustenance which he needeth, and hold himselfe well apaid, when God stirreth up other men to give it him. And that he put no manner of trust in the possession of any worldly goods, nor in the helpe or favour of any worldly friends, but principally and fully in God; for if he doth otherwise, he bindeth himselfe to the world, so that he cannot be free to thinke on Jesus. And also Gluttony, and Lechery, and all other fleshly uncleannesse must he utterly leave, that his affections be bound to no woman by fleshly familiarity; for it is no doubt but that such blinde love as is sometime betwixt a man and a woman, and seemeth good and honest, soasmuch as they would not sin in act, is in the sight of God full unclean and \* very great sinne. For it is a great sinne for a man to \*Wel great. suffer his affections, which should be fastned to Jesus and to all his vertues, and to all spiritual cleannesse, to be bound by any fleshly love willingly to any creature, especially if it be so much that it beareth downe his thoughts, and maketh them unrestfull, that he cannot have favour in God. And this I hold to be done willingly, when a man doth it, though he confesse it to be a sinne, or else when he is so blinded with it that he will not see it. And also that a man covet not del ghts of meates and drinks onely for lust of his flesh, but be contented with such as he can easily have without great trouble: Namely if he be in health with what meate will put away hunger, and keep his body in ordinary strength for the service of God. And that he grudge not, nor strive not, nor vexe himselfe for his meate, though sometime he be served not as his flesh desires. All these finnes, and all other must



Gal. 6.

must he forsake utterly in his will, and in deed which he can; and all other things that hinder him, so that he may dispose himselfe to thinke freely on Jesus. For as long as these lettings and such other hang upon him, he cannot dye to the world, nor come into this darknesse of knowing of himselfe. And therefore that he may come thereto, he must do all these things, as St. Paul did, saying thus: *This world is slaine and crucified to me, and I to the world.* That is, he that hath forsaken the love of the World in honours, and riches, and in all other worldly things abovesaid for the love of God, and loveth it not, nor pursueth it, but is well satisfied that he hath right nought of it, nor verily would have though he might, verily to him the world is dead, for he hath no savour nor delight therein. And if the world set him at nought, and hath no regard to him, nor savour, nor worship, and set no price by him, but forgetteth him as a dead man, then is he dead to the world? And in this plight was St. Paul set perfectly, and so must every other man in part that would come to the perfect love of God; for he cannot live to God fully, unlesse he dye first to the world. This dying to the world is this darknesse, and it is the gate to Contemplation, and to reforming in feeling, and none other then this. There may be many sundry wayes, and severall workes letting and leading sundry soules to Contemplation; for according to diverse disposings of men, and after diverse states as are religious and seculars, according as they are in, are there diverse exercises in working. Nevertheless there is but one gate; for whatsoever exercise a soule useth, unlesse thereby he come to this knowing, and to an humble feeling of himselfe, and that is, that he be mortified and dead to the world, as to his love of it, and that he may feel himself sometime in this restful darknesse, by the which he may be hid from the vanities of the world, as to the love of them, and that he may feelee himselfe what he is indeed, he is not yet come to the reforming in feeling, nor hath he Contemplation fully. He is full far from it,

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it; and if he will come to it by any other Gate, he is but a thiefe and a breaker of the wall, and therefore shall be cast out as unworthy.

But he that can bring himself first to nought by the grace of humility, and dye on this manner, he is in the gate; for he is dead to the world, and he liveth to God. Of the which St. Paul speaketh thus; *Ye are dead*. That is, ye that for the love of God forsake all the love of the world, are dead to the world, *& your life is hid with Christ in God*. That is, ye live spiritually in the love of Jesus. But your life is hid from worldly men, as Christ liveth, and is hid in his God-head from the love and the sight of fleshly lovers.

Colof. 3.

This Gate our Lord himselſe ſhewed in the Goſpel, when he ſaid thus; *Every man that forſaketh for my love father or mother, ſiſter or brother, or any earthly good, he ſhall have an hundred fold in this liſe, and afterward the bliſſe of heaven*. This hundred fold which a ſoule ſhall have, if he forſake the world, is nought but the profit of this lightſome darkneſſe, which I call the gate of *Contemplation*. For he that is in this darkneſſe, & is hid through grace from worldly vanity, he coveteth nothing of worldly goods, he ſeeketh it not, he is not hindered therewith, he looketh not after it, he loveth it not, and therefore hath he an hundred fold more then the King, or then he that coveteth moſt of worldly goods; for he that coveteth nought but Jeſus hath an hundred fold, for he hath more reſt, more peace in heart, more true love and delight in ſoule in one day, then he that moſt coveteth of this world, and hath all the wealth of it \* in his full poſſeſſion, hath all his liſe time.

\* *Under his welkt.*

This is then a good darkneſſe and a rich nought, that bringeth a ſoule to ſo much ſpirituall eaſe and ſo quiet ſoſtneſſe. I ſuppoſe *David* meant of this Night, or this nought, when he ſaid thus; *Ad nihilum redactus ſum, & Nescivi*. I was brought to nought, and I knew it not. That is, the grace of our Lord Jeſus ſent into my heart, hath ſlain in me, and brought to nought all the love of the world, and I knew not how; for not through any working of

Pſal. 73.

my owne, nor by my owne wit had I it, but by the grace of our Lord Jesus. And therefore me thinketh,  
 \* *Fulſomly.* that he that would have the light of grace, and \*  
 sweetly feele the love of Jesus in his soule, he must  
 \* *Wonne.* fortake all the false light or worldly love, and abide  
 in this darknesse. And *Neverthelesse* if he be fearfull  
 at first \* to continue therein, he must not turne again  
 to the love of the world, but suffer a while, and put  
 all his hope and his trust in Jesus, and he shall not  
 long be without some spirituall light. Thus the Pro-  
 phet commandeth; *Qui ambulat in tenebris, &c. He that*  
*walketh in darknesse and hath no light, let him hope in our*  
*Lord, and let him relye upon his God.* That is, who so  
 would hide himselfe from the love of the world, and  
 cannot readily feele the light of spirituall love, let  
 him not despair, nor turne againe to the world, but  
 \* *Leen.* hope in our Lord, and \* relye upon him; that is,  
 trust in God, and cleave to him by desire, and abide a  
 while, and he shall have light: For it falleth out  
 therein as it doth when a man hath been a great while  
 in the Sunne, and after that cometh suddenly into a  
 dark house, where no sun shineth, he will be as it  
 were blind, and see just nought: But if he will abide a  
 while, he shall be able presently to see about him, First,  
 great things, and then small things, and afterwards  
 all that is ever in the house. Just so is it spiritually;  
 He that forsaketh the love of the world, and cometh  
 to himselfe into his owne conscience, at first it is  
 some-what darke and blinde to his sight; But if he  
 stand still, and hold out by serious praying, and often  
 meditating on the same will to the love of Jesus, he  
 shall be able afterwards to see both great and small  
 things which he knew not before. This it seemeth  
 the Prophet promiseth when he saith thus; *Orietur in*  
*tenebris lux tua, &c. In darknesse shall thy light spring up,*  
*and thy darknesse shall be as noone-day, and thy Lord God*  
*shall give thee rest, and shall fill thy soule with lights.*  
 That is, thou that truly forsakest the light of all world-  
 ly love, and hidest thy thought in this darknesse,  
 light of blessed love and spirituall knowing of God  
 shall

shall spring up to thee, and thy darknesse shall be as mid-day; that is, thy darknesse of painefull desire, and thy blinde trust in God, that thou hast at first, shall turne into cleare knowledge, and into security of love, and thy Lord God shall give rest to thee; that is, thy fleshly desires, and thy painefull feares and doubts, and wicked spirits, that have before time vexed thee, all these shall \* grow weake, and lose much \* *Worcho.* of their might, and thou shalt be made so strong, that they shall not \* trouble thee, for thou shalt be hid in \* *Dere thee.* rest from them. And then shall our Lord fulfill thy soule with shinings; That is, when thou art brought into this spirituall rest, then shalt thou more easily attend to God, and do nought else but love him; and then shall he fill all the powers of thy soule with beams of spirituall light. Wonder not that I call the forsaking of worldly love a darknesse, for the Prophet calleth it so, saying thus to a soule; *Intra in tenebras tuas filia Chaldaeorum: Goe into thy darknesse thou daughter of Chaldee.* That is, thou soule, that art as a daughter of Chaldee, through love of the world, forsake it, and go into thy darknesse. IIa. 47.

## CHAP. IX.

*That the working of our Lord Jesus in the reforming of a Soule, is divided into foure times, which are Calling, \* Justifying, Magnifying, and Glori- \* Righting. fying.*

**L**Oe I have told thee a little, how, if thou covet to be reformed in feeling, thou shalt dispose thy selfe towards thy forth-going. Nevertheless I do not say, that thou canst do thus of thy selfe; for I know well that it is our Lord JESUS that bringeth all this to the end where he pleaseth: For he onely through his grace stirreth up a soule, and bringeth it first into this darknesse, and then into light, as the Prophet saith;



- Pfal. 37. *Sicut tenebrae ejus, ita & lumen ejus.* That is, just as the light of knowing and the feeling of spirituall love is from J E S U S, just so the darknesse, that is, the forsaking of worldly love is from him, for he doth all. He formeth and reformeth. He formeth onely by himselfe, but he reformeth us with us; for grace given, and the applying our will to grace doth worke all this. And in what manner this is done,
- Rom. 8. St. Paul rehearseth thus; *Quos Deus præscivit, &c.* Those whom God foreknew should be made conformable to the Image of his Sonne, those he called, and whom he called, those he justified, and whom he justified, those he glorified. Though these words may be understood of all chosen soules in the lowest degree of Charity, who are reformed onely in faith; Nevertheless they may be understood more specially of those soules that are reformed in feeling, to whom our Lord God sheweth great plenty of grace, and is much more busie about them; for they are in a special manner his owne children, who beare the full shape and the likenesse of his son Jesus. In these words St. Paul divideth the working of our Lord into four times.

\* *sosiness.*

The first is the time of calling of a soul from worldly vanity, and that time is often easie and comfortable; for in the beginning or turning such a man that is disposed to much grace, is so quickly and so feelingly inspired, and feeleth often so great sweetness of devotion, and hath so many teares in compunction, that he thinketh sometime that he is halfe in heaven: But this \* ease passeth away after for a time. And then cometh the second time, viz the time of *Justifying*, which is laborious; For when he beginneth to go forth mightily in the way of righteousness, and setteth his will fully against all sinne outward and inward, and stretcheth out his desires to vertues and to the love of Jesus, then feeleth he much letting both within himselfe from the frowardnesse and hardnesse of his owne will, and from without through the temptation of his enemy, that he is oft in full great torment, and that is no wonder;

for

## The Scale of Perfection.

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for he hath so long been crooked towards the false love of the world, that he cannot be made straight, as a crooked staffe cannot be made even, unlesse he be cast and \* wrought by the fire. Therefore our Lord J E S U S, knowing what is fit for a froward soule, suffereth it to be tormented and letted by sundry temptations, and to be tryed soundly by spiritual tribulations that all the rust of uncleannesse may be burnt out of it. And this shall be done both inwardly with seares, and doubts, and perplexities, that it shall almost fall into despair, and shall seeme as it were forsaken of God, and wholly left in the hands of the Fiend, (saving onely a little secret trust that it shall have in the goodnesse and me cy of God, for that secret trust our Lord leaveth in such a soule, though he goe never so farre from it, by the which the soule is borne up from despaire, and saved from spirituall mischief) and outwardly also it shall be mortified and \* payned in the sensuality, either by diverse sicknesses, or by feeble tormentings of the Enemy, or else by a secret working of G O D, the silly soule through feeling and bearing of the wretched body, shall be so pained, that it shall despaire almost of suffering or continuing in the body, unlesse our L O R D himselte keep it therein. And yet notwithstanding the soule had \* rather be in all this payne, then to be blinded with the false love of the world, for that would be hell to such a soule; but the suffering of this manner of paine is onely Purgatory, and therefore hee suffereth it gladly. And he would not put it away though he might, because it is so profitable. All this doth our L O R D in great profit to a soule to drive it out of its sensuality, that it may receive spirituall light; for after this, when a soule is thus mortified, and brought from worldly love into this darkenesse, that it hath no more favour nor delight of worldly liking then of a straw, but thinketh it bitter as Worme-wood; Then cometh the third time

\* Wryked.

\* Pyned.

\* Lever.

of *magnifying* ; and that is, when a soule is reformed in feeling in part, and receiveth the gift of perfection, and the grace of Contemplation, and that is a time of great rest ; for then is Jesus more familiar with a soule.

\* To the e-  
venbede.

And after this cometh a fourth time of *Glorifying* ; that is, when the soule shall be fully reformed in the blisse of Heaven : For these soules that are thus called from sinne, and thus *justified*, or else on any other manner by diverse tryals both through Fire and Water, and afterward are thus magnified, they shall be glorified. For our LORD shall then give them fully what they coveted here, and more then they could covet ; for he shall raise them above all other chosen soules, \* to be equall with Cherubins and Seraphins, seeing they passed all other in knowing and loving of GOD here in this life.

Therefore he that will come to this magnifying, must not be affraid of this justifying, for that is the way ; for our LORD saith by his Prophet a word of great comfort to all such soules that are tryed with the fire of Tribulation thus ; *Puer meus noli timere, &c. My Childe, if thou passe through Fire feare not, for the flame shall not hurt thee* It shall cleanse thee from all fleshly filth, and make thee able to receive spirituall fire of the love of God, and this must first be done ; for as I said before, it cannot otherwise be reformed in feeling.

## CHAP. X.

*How it falleth out sometimes, that soules that are but beginning or profiting in Grace, seeme to have more love, as to outward tokens thereof, then some have that be perfect, and yet it is not really so in their interior.*

**B**Ut now thou wilt say, how can this be true? For there be many soules newly turned to God that have many spirituall feelings; some have great compunction for their sins, and some have great devotions and fervours in their prayers, and often have sundry teachings of spirituall light in understanding, and some men have other kinde of feelings of comfortable heate, and great sweetnesse; and yet these soules never come fully into this restfull darknesse which I speake of with fervent desire, and lasting love, and thought on God. And hereupon thou askest, whether these soules be reformed in feeling or no? And it seemeth yes, inasmuch as they have such great spiritual feelings, which other men who stand onely in faith feel not.

Unto this I answer, as me-thinketh, that these spirituall feelings, whether they stand in compunction or devotion, or in spiritual imagination, are not the feelings which a soule shall have and feelee in the grace of *Contemplation*. I say not but that they are true, and graciously given of God; But these soules that feelee such are not yet reformed in feeling, nor have as yet the gift of perfection, nor the spirituall burning love of Jesus, as they may arrive to. And nevertheless; it often seemeth otherwise, that such soules feelee more of the love of God, then others that have the gift of perfection, inasmuch as the feeling sheweth more outwardly by great fervour of bodily tokens, in weeping, praying, kneeling, and speaking, and



other bodily stirrings, so farre forth that it seemeth to another man, that they were even ravished in love. Though I for my part doe not thinke them so, for I will understand that these kinde of feelings and fervours of Devotion and Compunction that these men feele, are gracious gifts of God sent into chosen soules to draw them out of worldly love and fleshly lust, which hath long time been rooted in their hearts, from the which love they would not be drawn out but by such feeble motions of great fervours.

And the reason why this fervour is so much in outward shewing, is not onely from the greatnesse of that love which they have, but from the littlenesse and weaknesse of their soule, that cannot beare a little touching of God: for it is yet as it were fleshly, fastned to the flesh, and never was yet parted from it by spirituall mortification; and therefore the least touching of love, and the least sparkle of spirituall light sent from Heaven into such a soule is so much, and so comfortable, and so delectable above all the likings that ever it felt before in fleshly love of earthly things, that she is as it were overcome with it. And also it is so new, and so suddaine, and so \* unaccustomed to her, that she is not able to beare it, but bursteth and breaketh out into weeping sobbing, and other bodily stirrings. Just as \* a barrell that is old, when it receiveth new wine that is fresh and strong, the barrell \* swelleth out, and is ready to cleave, and burst, until the Wine hath boyled and purged out all uncleannesse: but as soone as the Wine is fined, and cleared then it standeth still, and the barrel whole. Just so a soule, that is old through sin, when it receiveth a little of the love of God, which is so fresh and strong, that the body is in point to cleave and to breake, were it not that God keepeth it whole: But yet it bursteth out at the eyes by weeping, and at the mouth by speaking, which is more for weakenesse and feeblenesse of the soule, then through \* greatnesse of love. For afterward, when love hath boyled all

\* *Unkouth.*

\* *A costrel.*

\* *Boldnes.*

\* *Mykilnes.*

all uncleannesse out of the soule by such great fervours, then is the love cleare, and standeth still. And then is both the body and the soule much more in peace. And yet hath the soule much more love then it had before, though it shew lesse outwardly; For it is now all whole in rest within, and but little in outward shewing of fervour. And therefore I say, that these soules that feelee such great bodily fervours, though they be in much grace, are not yet reformed in feeling, but they are greatly disposed toward it. For I trow, that such a man, namely that hath beene greatly defiled in sinne, shall not be reformed in feeling, unlesse he be first burnt and purified with such great Compunctions going before.

Another soule that never was much defiled with the love of the World, but hath ever beene kept from great sinnes in innocency, may lightlyer and more privily without great fervour shewed outwardly, come to this reforming. Then is this true as I hope, that such comforts and fervours that a **S O U L E** feeleth in a state of its beginning, or of its profiting are as it were his spirituall Food sent from Heaven for to strengthen him in his journey. Even as a Pilgrime travelleth all day meatelesse and drinkelesse, and is neare-hand overcome with wearinesse, falleth at last to a good Inne, and there hath he meate and drinke, and is well refreshed for the time: Right so is it spiritually; A devout **S O U L E**, that will forsake the love of the World, and would faine love **G O D**, and setteth all her businesse thereto, prayeth and exerciseth all day bodily and spiritually, and sometime feeleth no comfort nor savour in devotion: Then our **L O R D** having pittie on all his Creatures, that they should not perish for want, nor fall into heavinesse or grudging, sendeth it with, and among other things his spirituall Food, and comforteth it in Devotion as he pleaseth.

And

And when the soule feeleth any comfort, then doth she hold her selfe well payd for all her travell, and all the suffering it had on the day, when it fareth well at night by feeling of any grace.

Also in the same manner falleth it out with other soules that are profiting and proceeding well forward in grace. These feele oftentimes gracious touchings of the holy Ghost in their soule, both in understanding and sight of spiritual things, and in affection of love. But yet be they not reformed in feeling, nor are they yet perfect; for why? All such feelings come to them in that state as it were unawares, for they come to them ere they thinke of them, and go from them before they thinke; and they cannot come by such things againe, nor wote they where they may finde them; for they have not as yet any \* familiarity with them, of thought and lasting desire in Jesus: Nor is the eye of their soul opened to the beholding of spiritual things, but they \* draw well toward it. And therefore they are not yet reformed in feeling, nor have yet the full gift of *Contemplation*.

\* *Homeliness.*

\* *Nigh fast.*

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## C H A P. XI.

*After what manner a man shall come to know his owne soule, and how a man should set his love in Jesus, God and man in one person.*

**A** Soule that would know spiritual things, needs first to have the knowledge of its selfe; for she cannot have the knowledge of a thing that is above her selfe, unlesse she have first the knowledge of her selfe. And that is when the soule is so gathered into her selfe, and seperated from beholding of all earthly things, and from the use of her bodily senses, that she feeleth her selfe as she is in her owne kinde, which is without a body. Then if thou covet for to know and see thy soul what it is, thou shalt not turn thy thought with

with imagination into thy body, to seeke it, and seele it as it were hid within thy heart, as thy heart is hid and holden within thy body: If thou seeke in that manner, thou shalt never finde it in it selfe. The more thou seekest for to finde and seele it, as thou wouldst seele a bodily thing, the farther thou art from it; For thy soule is no bodily thing, but a life invisible, not hid and holden within thy body, as a lesse thing is hidden and holden within a greater; but it holdeth and quickneth thy body, and is much greater in might and vertue then is thy body. If then thou wilt finde it, withdraw thy thoughts from all bodily things outward, and from minding of thy owne body also from all thy five senses, as much as thou canst, and thinke on the nature of a reasonable soule spiritually, as thou wouldst thinke for to know any vertue, as justice, humility, or any other: Right so thinke that a soule is a life immortall, invisible, and hath in it selfe a power to know the soveraigne verity, and for to love the soveraign goodnesse, which is God; when thou seest this, then seelest thou somewhat of thy self. Seek thy selfe in none other place, but the more fully the more clearly that thou thinkest of the nature and the worthiness of a reasonable soule what it is, and what is the kindly working of it, the better seest thou thy selfe.

It is full hard for a soule that is rude, and much in the flesh for to have sight and knowledge of it selfe, or of an Angell, or of God. It falleth presently to the imagining of a bodily shape, and it weeneth thereby to have the sight of it self, and in like manner of God, and of spiritual things: And that may not be, for all spiritual things are scene and knowne by the understanding of the soule, not by the imagination: Right as a soule seeth by her understanding, that the vertue of righteousness is to give to every thing that which he ought to have: Right so, and on such a manner may the soule see it selfe by the understanding.

Never-



\* *A mir-  
ror.*

Neverthelesse I say not that thy soule should rest still in this knowing, but it shall by this seek a higher knowledge above it selfe, and that is the nature of God, for the soule is but \* a glasse, in the which thou shouldst see God spiritually. And therefore thou shalt first finde thy glasse and keepe it bright and clean from fleshly filth and worldly vanity, and hold it well up from the earth that thou mayest see it and our Lord therein also: For to this end do all chosen soules travel in this life, in their meaning and in their intent, though they have not the speciall feeling of this. And therefore it is said before, that many soules beginning and profiting have many great servours, and much sweet devotion, and as it seemeth are all burinng in love, and yet have they not love perfectly nor spiritual knowledge of God. For be thou well assured, that though a soule feele never so much servour, even so much that he thinketh his body cannot beare it; or though he melt all into weeping, as long as his thinking and his beholding of God is for the most part or all in imagination and not in the understanding, he is not yet come to perfect love nor to *Contemplation*.

For thou shalt understand that the love of God is in three manner of wayes; All of which are good, but each one is better then the other. The first cometh onely through Faith, without gracious imagination or spirituall knowing of God. This love is in the least soule that is reformed in Faith, in the lowest degree of charity; and it is good, for it sufficeth to salvation. The second is that which a soule feeleth through faith and imagination of Jesus in his Manhood. This love is better then the first, when the imagination is stirred by grace, for then the spiritual eye is opened in beholding of our Lords humanity. The third love that a soule feeleth through spiritual sight of the God-head in the humanity as it may be seene here, is the best and most worthy, and that is perfect love. This love a soule feeleth not, untill it be reformed in feeling. Soules beginning and profiting have not this love, for they cannot thinke on Jesus, nor love him

him \*spiritually, but as it were all manly and fleshly, \*Goodly.  
after the conditions and likenesse of a man ; and accordingly they frame all their working in their thoughts and in their affections. They reare him as a man , and worship him and love him principally by the imagination of his humunity , and go no further.

As thus ; If they have done amisse , and trespassed against God , they think then that God is angry with them , as a man would be if they had trespassed against him ; and therefore they fall downe as it were at the feet of our Lord with sorrow of heart , and cry him mercy. And when they have done thus , they have a good trust that our Lord of his mercy will forgive them their trespassse. This manner of doing is right good , but it is not spirituall as it might be. Also when they would worship God they present themselves in their thoughts , as if they were before our Lords face in a bodily likenesse , and imagine a wonderfull light there where our Lord Jesus is , and then they reverence him , and worship him , and feare him , and fully put them into his mercy for to doe with them what he will. Also when they would love God , they behold him , worship him , and dread him as a man ; ( not yet as G O D in the humanity ) either in his passion , or in some other thing of his humanity , and in that beholding they feelee their hearts much stirred to the love of God.

This manner of working is good and gracious , but it is much lesse and lower then is the working of the understanding ; that is , when the S O U L E graciously beholdeth God in man , for in our Lord J E S U S are two natures , the Humanity and the Divinity : And as the Divinity is more soveraigne and more worthy then the Humanity , right so the spirituall beholding of the Divinity in J E S U S Man is more worthy , and more spirituall , and more \*meritorious then the beholding of the Humanity alone , whether hee behold the Humanity as mortal , or as glorified. And right so by the same  
reason

\*Medeful.

reason the love of a soule seeleth in thinking and beholding of the Divinity in the Man-hood, when it is graciously shewed, is more worthy, more spirituall, and more meritorious then the fervour of devotion, that the soule seeleth by imagination onely of the humanity shew it never so much outwardly; for in regard of that of the Divinity, this of the Humanity is but a humane thing: For our Lord sheweth not himselfe in the imagination as he is, nor that he is, for the soule cannot at that time for frailty of the flesh suffer it so.

Neverthelesse unto such soules that cannot meditate on the Divinity spirituallly, that they may not erre in their devotion, but that they should be comforted and strengthened by some manner of inward beholding of Jesus for to forsake sinne and the love of the world, therefore our Lord Jesus tempereth this invisible light of his God-head, and cloatheth it under bodily likenesse of his Man-hood, and sheweth it unto the inner eye of the soule, and seedeth it with the love of his precious flesh spirituallly. The which love is of so great might, that it slayeth all wicked love in the soule, and strengthens it for to suffer bodily penance and other bodily difficulties in the time of need, for the love of Jesus. And this is the shadowing of our Lord Jesus over a chosen soule, in the which shadowing the soule is kept from the burning of worldly love; for as a shadow is made of a light and of a body, even so this spirituall shadow is made of the blessed invisible Light of the God-head, and of the Man-hood united thereto, shewed to a devout soule. Of the which shadow the Prophet saith thus;

Thren. 4. *Spiritus ante faciem nostram, &c.* Our Lord Christ before our face as a spirit, under his shadow we shall live among folkes. That is, our Lord Jesus in his God-head is a spirit, that cannot be seene of us living in flesh as he is in his blessed light, therefore we shall live under the shadow of his Man-hood as long as we are here.

But though that this be true that this love in imagination is good; Neverthelesse a soule should desire

to have spiritual love in understanding of the God-head ; for that is the end and the full blisse of the soule, and all bodily beholdings are but meanes leading a soule to it. I say not that we should refuse the Manhood of Jesus , and separate God from man ; But thou shalt in Jesus man, behold , feare , admire and love spiritually the God-head , and so shalt thou without separating them love God in man , and both God and man spiritually and fleshly. Thus our Lord taught *Mary Magdalene* to do like a Contemplative, when he said thus ; *Noli me tangere*, &c. *Touch me not : I am not yet* \* *ascended to my Father.* The meaning is this ; *Mary Magdalene* loved our Lord Jesus well before the time of his passion , but her love was much bodily , and little spiritual ; She understood well that he was God, but she loved him but little as God ; for she could not then , and therefore she suffered all her affection and all her thoughts to fall on him as he was in forme of Man. And our Lord blamed her not then , but praised it much. But after when he was risen from death , and appeared to her, she would have worshipped him with the same manner of love as she did before , and then our Lord forbade her , and said thus ; *Touch me not.* That is , set not thy rest nor the love of thy heart on that forme of Man which thou seest with thy fleshly eye, for to rest therein onely , for in that forme I am not ascended up to my Father ; that is, I am not \* *equall to the Father* , for in that forme of man I am lesse then he. Touch me not so , but set thy thought and thy love on that form in which I am equall to the Father , that is, the forme of the God-head ; and love me , know me , and worship me, as God and Man, godly, not as a Man, manly, so shalt thou touch me. For since I am both God and Man , and all the reason why I am to be beloved and worshipped is, for that I am God , and for that I took the nature of Man. And therefore make me a God in thy heart and in thy love , and worship me in thine understanding as Jesus, God and man, the soveraigne verity , and the soveraigne goodnesse ; and blessed

\* *Sayed up.*

\* *Even.*



blessed life, for I am so. And thus our Lord taught her, as I understand, and also all other soules that are disposed to *Contemplation*, and enabled thereto that they should do so. Neverthelesse other souls that are

\* *Subtle in kinde.*

not \* skilful, nor are yet made spiritual through grace, its good for them that they keep on their owne working in imagination, with affections towards our Saviours humanity, untill more grace come freely to them. It is not safe for a man to leave any good thing utterly, until he see and feel a better.

In like manner may it be said of other kinde of feelings that are like to bodily, as hearing of delectable songs, or feeling of comfortable heate in the body, feeling of light, or sweetnesse of bodily favour. These are not spirituall feelings; for spiritual feelings are felt in the powers of the soule, principally in the understanding, and in love, and little in imagination. But these feelings are felt in the powers of the body in the imagination, and therefore are not spiritual feelings. But when they are even at best, and most true, yet are they but outward tokens of the inward grace which is felt in the powers of the soule. This may be plainly proved out of holy Writ, saying thus; *Apparuerunt Apostolis. &c. The holy Ghost appeared to the Apostles in the day of Pentecost in the likenesse of burning tongues. and enflamed their hearts, and sate upon each of them.* Now it is true, that the holy Ghost, which is God in himselfe invilible, was not that fire nor those tongues that were seene, nor that burning which was felt bodily, but he was invisibly felt in the powers of their soules, for he enlightened their reason, and kindled their affections through his blessed presence so clearly and so burningly that they had suddenly the spiritual knowledge of truth, and the perfection of love as our Lord \* promised them, saying thus; *Spiritus sanctus docebit vos, &c. The holy spirit shall teach you all truth.* That fire and that burning then was nought else but a bodily token shewed outwardly in witnessing of that grace, which was felt inwardly. And as it was in them, so is it in other soules that are visited and

Acts 2.

\* *Behyght.*

and lightned within of the Holy Ghost, and have withall such outward feelings for comforting them and witnessing of their inward grace. But yet I doe not thinke that such grace is in all Soules that are perfect, but onely where our LORD pleaseth.

Other imperfect Soules that have such feelings outwardly, and have not yet received inward grace, it is not good for them to rest in such outward feelings, but onely in as much as they helpe the SOULE to more love, and to more stablesse of thought in GOD; for some may be true, and some may be feigned, as I have said before.

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## THE THIRD PART.

### CHAP. I.

*In what sense this manner of speaking of reforming of a Soule in feeling is to be understood; and in what manner it is reformed, and how it is found in Saint Pauls writings.*

**I** Have heretofore told thee some-what of reforming in Faith, and also I have touched concerning thy proceeding from that reforming to an higher reforming which is in feeling. Not that I would by these discourses limit Gods working by the law of my speaking, as to say, that God worketh thus in a soule and no otherwise: No, I meane not so, but I speak after my simple feeling that our Lord worketh thus in some creatures as I conceive. And I hope well also that he worketh otherwise, which passeth my wit and my feeling. Neverthelesse whether he worketh thus or otherwise by severall wayes, in longer time or shorter, with much travell or little, if all come to one end; that is, the perfect love of him, then is it good enough. For if he will give one soule on one day the full grace of Contemplation, and without any travell, as he well may; as good is that to that soule, as if he had been tryed, pyned, mortified, and purified twenty yeares. And therefore in this manner take my sayings as I have said, and namely as I meant to say them.

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them. For now by the grace of our Lord Jesus shall I speak a little as me-thinketh more plainly of reforming in feeling, what it is, and how it is made, and what are spiritual feelings which a soule receiveth. Yet in the first place, that I may not be understood to make this manner of speaking of reforming of a soule in feeling, as a fiction or fancy of my owne; I shall ground it on St. Pauls words, where he saith thus; *Nolite conformari huic sæculo*, &c. That is, ye that are through grace reformed in Faith, conforme not your selves henceforward to the manner of the world, in pride, in covetousnesse, and in other sinnes, *but be ye reformed in newnesse of feeling*. Lo here thou mayest see that St. Paul speaketh of reforming in feeling: And what that newness of feeling is, he expoundeth in another place thus; *Ut impleamini in agnitione*, &c. That is, *We pray God that yee may be fulfilled in knowing of Gods will in all understanding, and in all manner of spiritual wisdom*. This is reforming in feeling; for thou must understand that the soule hath two manner of feelings, one without, by the five bodily senses; Another within, of the spiritual senses, which are properly the faculties of the soule, memory, understanding, and will. When these faculties are through grace fulfilled in all understanding of the will of God, and spirituall wisdom, then hath the soule new gracious feelings. That this is so, he sheweth in another place thus; *Renovamini spiritu mentis vestri*, &c. *Be yee renewed in the spirit of your soule*. That is, ye shall be reformed, not in bodily feeling, nor in imagination, but in the upper part of your reason. *And be cloathed with the new man, that is shapen after God in righteousness, holiness, and truth*. That is, your reason, which is properly the image of God, through grace of the Holy Ghost, shall be cloathed in a new light of truth, holiness, and righteousness, and then is it reformed in feeling. For when the soule hath perfect knowledge of God, then is it reformed. Thus saith St. Paul; *Expoliantes veterem hominem*, &c. *Spoyle your selfe of the old man with all his deeds*. That is, cast

Rom. 12.

*In novitate sensus.*

Colof. 1.

Colof. 3.



from you the love of the World, with all worldly manners, *and cloath you with the new Man* : That is, you shall be renewed in the knowing of God after the likenesse of him that made you.

By these words thou mayest understand, that Saint Paul would have mens soules reformed in perfect knowledge of GOD, for that is the new feeling which he speaketh of generally. And therefore upon his words I shall speake more plainly of this reforming as God shall give me grace. For there be two manners of knowing of God :

One is had principally in imagination, and little in understanding. This knowing is in chosen soules beginning and profiting in grace, who know GOD, and love him humanely (not spiritually) with humane affections, and with a corporall image of his humanity as I have spoken before.

This knowing is good, and it is likened to milke, by which they are tenderly nourished as children untill they be able to come to the Fathers Table, and take from his hand substantial bread.

Another knowing is principally felt in the understanding, and little in imagination ; for the understanding is the Lady, and the imagination is the maid, serving the understanding when need is. This knowing is solid bread, meet for perfect soules, and is reforming in feeling.

CHAP. II.

*How God openeth the inward eye of the SOULE to see him, not all at once, but by diverse times, and of three manners of reforming of a soule explained by a familiar example.*

**A** Soule that is called from the love of the world, and after that is righted, tryed, and mortified, and purified, as I have said before, our Lord JESUS of his mercitull goodnesse reformeth it in feeling when he pleaseth. He openeth the inner eye of the soule, when he enlighteneth her reason through the touching and shining of his blessed Light for to see him and know him, not all fully at once, but by little and little, by diverse times, as the soule is able to beare it. He seeth him not what hee is, for that can no Creature doe in Heaven nor in Earth. Nor seeth hee him as hee is, for that sight is onely in the blisse of heaven. But he seeth him that he is an unchangeable being, a supream power, a soveraigne truth, supream goodnesse, a blessed lie, an endlesse blisse. This seeth a soule, and much more that cometh withall not blindly, and nakedly, and unsavourly, as doth a learned man, that knoweth and seeth him onely by his Learning, through might of his naked reason; but he seeth him in understanding, that is, comforted and lighted by the gift of the holy Ghost, with a wonderful reverence, and a secret burning love, and with a spirituall favour, and heavenly delight, more clearely and more fully then can be written or spoken.

This sight, though it be but short and little, is so worthy and so mighty, that it draweth and ravisheth all

1 John 4.

all the affections of the sou'e from beholding and minding of all earthly things to it selfe, for to rest therein evermore if it could. And upon this kinde of sight and knowing, the soule groundeth all its working inward in all the affections; for then she worshippeth God in the humanity, as verity; wondreth at him, as power, and might; loveth him as goodnesse. This sight, and this goodnesse, and this knowing of Jesus, with the blessed love that cometh out of it, may be called reforming of a soule in feeling and in faith which I have spoken of. It is in faith, for it is darke, yet in comparison of that full knowing of Jesus, with the blessed love that cometh out of it, that shall be in heaven; For then shall we see him, not onely that he is, but as he is, as St. *John* saith; *Tunc videbimus eum sicut est*, Then shall we see him as he is. Neverthelesse it is in feeling also, as in regard of that blinde knowing that a soule hath standing onely in faith, for this soule knoweth some-what of the very nature of Jesus as God through this gracious sight, which that other in faith knoweth not, but onely believeth it to be truth.

Neverthelesse that thou mayest the better conceive what I meane, I shall shew these three manners of reforming of a soule by example of three men standing in the light of the Sun: Of the which one is blinde, another can see, but hath his eyes stopped, the third looketh forth with full sight. The blinde man hath no manner of knowledge that he is in the Sunne, but he believeth it if an honest man tell him so; and he betokeneth a soule that is onely reformed in Faith, that believeth in God as *Holy Church* teacheth and understandeth not what. This sufficeth as to salvation; That other man seeth a light of the Sun, but he seeth it not clearly what it is, for his eye-lid letteth him that he cannot see; but he seeth through the lids of his eyes a glimmering of great light. And this man betokenenth a soule that is reformed in Faith and in feeling, and so he is Contemplative, for he seeth some-what of the God-head of Jesus through grace,  
not

not clarly nor fully ; for the lidde that is his bodily nature , is yet a wall betwixt his nature and the nature of Jesus God , and letteth him from the cleare sight : But he seeth through this wall , after that grace toucheth him more or lesse , that Jesus is God , and that Jesus is soveraigne goodnesse , and soveraigne being , and a blessed life , and that all other goodnesse cometh from him. Thus seeth the soule by grace , notwithstanding its bodily \* nature ; and the more cleane and subtile that the soul is made , and the more it is separated from sensuality , the sharper sight it hath , and the greater love of the Divinity of Jesus. This sight is so mighty , that though no other man living should believe in Jesus , nor love him , yet would he never believe the lesse , nor love him the lesse , for he seeth it so certainly , that he cannot but believe it.

\* Kinde.

The third man that hath full sight of the Sunne , he believeth it not , for he seeth it fully : And he betokeneth a full blessed soule , that without any wall of his body or of sinne seeth openly the face of Jesus in the blisse of heaven. There is no faith , and therefore he is fully reformed in feeling. There is no state above the second reforming that a soule can come to here in this life , for this is the state of perfection , and the way to heaven-ward. Neverthelesse all the souls that are in this state are not all alike in degrees ; for some have it little , short , and seldome ; and some longer , clearer , and oftner , and some have it best of all clearest , and longest according to the abounding of grace , and yet all these have the gift of *Contemplation*. For the soule hath not perfect sight of Jesus all at once , but at first a little and a little , and after that it profiteth and cometh to more feeling ; and as long as it is in this life , it groweth more in knowing , and in this love of Jesus. And verily I know not what can be more \* desirable to such a soule that hath felt a little of it , then utterly to leave it , and set at nought all other things , for to \* hold onely thereto , to have a clearer sight , and clearer love of Jesus in whom is all the blessed Trinity.

\* Leyf.

\* Tent.



This manner of knowing of JESUS, as I understand, is the opening of Heaven to the eye of a cleane soule, of which holy Men speak in their Writings. Not as some imagine, that the opening of Heaven, is as if a soule could see by imagination through the Skyes above the Firmament, how our Lord Jesus sitteth in his Majesty, in a bodily Light, as much as an hundred Suns. No it is not so, no though he see never so high on this manner, verily he seeth not the spirituall Heaven. The higher he \* soareth up above the Sunne for to see Jesus God, thus by such imagination the lower he falleth beneath the Sunne. Neverthelesse this kinde of sight is tolerable in simple soules that can seek no better for him that is invifible.

\* *Styeth.*

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### CHAP. III.

*How JESUS is Heaven to the Soule, and why he is called Fire.*

**W**HAT then is Heaven to a reasonable soule? Verily nought else but Jesus God. For if that be Heaven onely that is above all things, then is God onely Heaven to mans soule, for he alone is above the nature of a soule. Then if a soule can through grace have knowledge of that blessed nature of JESUS, verily he seeth Heaven, for he seeth God. Therefore there be many men that erre in understanding of some words that are spoken of God, for that they understand them not spiritually.

Holy Writ saith, that a soule that will finde God must lift her inward eye upward, and seeke God above it selfe. Then some men that would doe after this saying, understand this word *above themselves*, to signifie the placing or setting of a thing in place and worthinesse above another, as one Element or Planet is above another in scituation, and worthinesse

ness of a bodily place. But it is not so taken spiritually ; for a soule is above each bodily thing , not in place , or sight , but in purity , and worthinesse of nature. Right so in the same manner God is above all bodily and spiritual creatures , not in place and sight , but in \* purity and worthinesse of his unchangeable blessed nature.

\* Subtlety.

And therefore he that will wisely seeke God , and finde him , he must not run out with his thoughts as if he would climbe above the Sun , and part the Firmament , and imagine the Majesty like to an hundred Suns : But he must rather draw downe the Sun , and all the Firmament , and forget it , and cast it beneath him where he is , and set all this and all bodily things also at nought ; and then , if he can , think spiritually both of himselfe and of God also. And if he do thus , then seeth the soule above it selfe , then seeth it into heaven.

Upon this same manner shall this word *within* be understood ; It is commonly said that a soul should see our Lord *within all things* , and *within it selfe* ; True it is , that our Lord is *within* all creatures , but not on that manner that a kernell is hid within the shell of a Nut ; or as a little bodily thing is contained within a greater : But he is within all creatures , as holding and preserving them in their being , through the subtlety and power of his owne blessed nature , and purity invisible. For even as a thing that is most precious , and most cleane , is layd innermost ; Right so by the same likenesse it is said that the nature of God which is most precious , most cleane , most goodly , most remote from bodily substance , is hid within all things. And therefore he that will seek God within , he must first forget all bodily things , for all such things are without ; and also his own body , and he must forget thinking of his owne soule , and think on the uncreated nature ; that is , Jesus who made him , quickneth him , holdeth him , and giveth him reason , memory , and love , the which is within him through his power and soveraign subtlety.

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Upon this manner must the soule do, when grace toucheth it, or else it will but little auaile to seek Iesus, and to finde him within it selfe, and within all creatures as me thinketh.

Also it is said in holy Writ, that God is light. So  
**I John I.** saith St. *John*; *God is light*. This Light we must not take for a bodily Light; but it must be understood thus, *God is light*: That is, God is truth and \* verity it selfe, for verity is spiritual Light. He then that most graciously knoweth verity, best seeth God. And neverthelesse it is likened to corporal Light, for this reason: Right as the Sunne sheweth to the bodily eye both it selfe and all bodily things thereby; Even so verity, that is God, sheweth to the reason of the soule it selfe first, and by it selfe all other spiritual things that are needful to the knowing of a soule. Thus saith the Prophet, *Domine in lumine tuo videbimus lumen*; *Lord we shall see thy light by thy light*. That is, we shall see thee, who art verity, by thy selfe.

**Psal. 35.**

**Heb. 12.**

In like manner it is said that God is fire. *Our God is wasting fire*. That is to say, God is not Elementary fire, that heateth and burneth a body, but God is love and charity: For as fire wasteth all bodily things, that can be wasted, even so the love of God burneth and wasteth all sinne out of the soul, and maketh it clean, as fire cleanseth all manner of mettals. These words and all other, that are spoken of our Lord in holy writ by bodily similitude, must needs be understood spiritually, else there is no savour in them. And the reason why such words are said of our Lord in holy Writ is this, for that we are so carnal, that we cannot speake of God, nor understand any thing of him, unlesse we be first entred by such words. But when the inner eye is open through grace to have a little sight of Iesus, then will the soul easily enough turn all such words of bodily things into spiritual understanding. This spiritual opening of the inner eye into knowing of the Divinity, I call *reforming* in faith and feeling. For then the soule feeleth somewhat in understanding of that  
 \* *Trowing*. thing that it had before, in naked \* believing, and that

that is the beginning of Contemplation. Of the which St. Paul saith thus ; *Non Contemplantibus nobis quæ videntur, &c.* Our Contemplation is not on things that are seene, but on things unseen ; For things that are seene are passing, but things unseene are everlasting. To which sight every soule should desire to come, both here in part, and in the blisse of heaven fully. For in that sight, and in that knowing of Jesus fully, consisteth the blisse of a reasonable soule and endlesse life. Thus saith our Lord, *Hæc est autem ultia æterna, &c.* This is eternall life that they know thee the true God, and thy Son whom thou hast sent. 2 Cor. 4. John 6.

## CHAP. IV.

*Of two manner of loves, Created and uncreated, and how we are bound to love JESUS much for our creation ; but more for our Redemption : and most of all for our Salvation, through the gifts of his love.*

**B**Ut now perhaps thou wonderest why, since this knowing of God is the blisse and end of a Soule, why I have said heretofore that a soule should covet nought else but onely the love of God, and speake nothing of this sight that a soule should covet it.

Unto this I may answer, that the sight of Jesus is the full blisse of a soule ; but not onely for the sight, but also for the blessed love that cometh out of that sight. And because that love cometh out of knowing, and not knowing out of love ; Therefore it is said, that in knowing, and in sight principally of God with love is the blisse of a soule ; and the more he is known, the better he is loved. But forasmuch as a soule cannot arrive to this knowing, and the love that cometh out of it without love, therefore I say that thou must covet love ; for love is a cause why a soule cometh to this knowing, and to the love that cometh out



out of it. And in what manner that is, I shall tell thee more plainly.

Holy Writers say, and true it is, that there be two sorts of spirituall love; One is called *Created*, and the other *uncreated*. Love *uncreated* is God himselfe, the third Person in the Trinity, that is the Holy Ghost; He is love uncreated, and unmade; as Saint John saith, *God is love*. That is, the holy Ghost. Love *created* is the affection of the soule produced by the holy Ghost out of the sight and the knowing of Verity; that is, God stirred up and set upon him. This love is called *created*, for it is made by the holy Ghost. This love is not God in himselfe, for it is made: But it is the love of the soule felt by the sight of Jesus, and stirred up towards him onely. Now may you see that created love is not the cause why a soule cometh to the spirituall sight of JESUS. And some men think that they could love God so fervently, as it were by their owne strength, that they might be worthy to have the spirituall knowing of him. No, it is not so; But love uncreated, that is God himselfe, is cause of all this knowing: For a blinde wretched soule is so farre from the cleare knowing, and the blessed feeling of his love through sinne, and frailty of its corporall nature, that it could never come to it, if it were not for the endlesse greatnesse of the love of GOD. But because he loveth us so much, therefore giveth he us his love, that is the Holy Ghost. He is both the giver and the gift, and maketh us then by that gift for to know and love him.

Lo this is the love that I spake of, that thou shouldst onely covet and desire this uncreated love, that is the Holy Ghost; for verily a lesse thing or a lesse gift then he is cannot availe us, to bring us to the blessed sight of JESUS. And therefore ought we fully to desire and aske of JESUS onely this gift of love, that he would for the greatnesse of his so blessed love touch our hearts with his invisible light to the know-

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knowledge of himselfe, and make us partakers of his love; that as he loveth us, so we might love him againe. Thus saith Saint *John*, *Nos diligamus Deum*, &c. *Let us love God now, for he loved us first.* I *John* 4. He loved us much when he made us after his likenesse; but he loved us more when he bought us with his precious blood, by voluntary undertaking of Death in his humanity, from the power of the Enemy, and the paines of Hell; but he loveth us most, when he giveth us the gift of the Holy Ghost, that is love, by the which we know him, and love him, and are made secure that wee are his sons chosen to Salvation: For this love are wee more bound to him, then for any other love that ever hee shewed to us, either in our making or redeeming: For though he had made us and bought us, if he did not save us withall, what would our making or redeeming profit us? Verily right nought.

Therefore the greatest token of love shewed to us, as me thinketh, is this; That he giveth himselfe in his God-head to our soules. He gave himselfe, first, in his Man-hood to us for our ranfome, when he offered himselfe to the Father of Heaven upon the Altar of the Crosse.

This was a right faire gift, and a right great token of love: But when he giveth himselfe in his God-head spiritually to our SOULES for our salvation, and maketh us to know him, and to love him, then loveth he us fully; for then giveth he himselfe to us, and more cannot he give us, nor could lesse suffice us. And for this cause it is said, that the justifying of a sinfull soule through forgivenesse of sinnes is \* attributed and appropriated principally to the working of holy Ghost; for the Holy Ghost is love. And in the justifying of a sinner, our LORD JESUS sheweth to a soule most of his love; for he putteth away all sinne, and uniteth it to him: and that

\* *Arrested.*

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that is the best thing that he can do to a soule : and therefore it is attributed to the holy Ghost. The making of the soule is attributed to the Father, as to the soveraigne might and power that he sheweth in making of it. The redeeming of it is attributed to the Sonne, as to the soveraigne skill and wisdom that he shewed in his Man-hood ; for he overcame the enemy principally through wisdom, and not through strength. But the justifying and full saving of a soule through forgivenesse of sinnes is appropriated to the third person, that is the holy Ghost, for therein sheweth JESUS most love unto mans soule, and for that thing should he be most loved of us againe. His making is common to us, and all unreasonable creatures ; for as he made us of nought, so made he them, and therefore this is a worke of greatest might, but not of greatest love. Also the Redemption is common to us, and all reasonable soules, as to Jewes and Saracens, and to false Christian men ; for he dyed for all soules alike, and bought them if they would have the perfect love of it : And also it is sufficient for the restoring of all, though it be so that all have it not. And this worke had most of wisdom, not most of love. But the justifying and sanctifying of our soules through the gift of the holy Ghost, that is onely the worke of love, and is not common, but a special gift onely to chosen soules. And verily that is most the working of love to us that are his chosen Children.

*Love doth  
all.*

This is the love of God that I spake of, which thou shouldst covet and desire ; for this love is God himselfe, and the holy Ghost. This love uncreated when it is given to us, it worketh in our soules all that good is, and all that belongeth to goodnesse. This love loveth us before we love him, for it cleanseth us first from our sins, it maketh us to love him, and maketh our wills strong to withstand all sinnes, and stirreth us up to exercise our selves through diverse exercises both bodily and ghostly in all vertues. It stirreth us up also to forsake sinne and carnal affections, and  
worldly

worldly feares ; It keepeth us from malicious Temptations of the enemy , and driveth us out from busines and vanities of the world , and from the conversation of worldly lovers. All this doth the uncreated love of God , when he giveth himselfe to us , we do right nought but suffer him and assent to him ; for that is the most that we do to assent willingly to his gracious working in us. And yet is not that will from and of our selves but of his making, so that me thinketh he doth in us all that is well done , and yet we see it not.

And he not onely doth all thus, but afterward this love doth more ; for he openeth the eye of the soul, and sheweth to the soul the sight of Jesus wonderfully, and the knowledge of him as well as the soul can suffer it by little and little ; and by that sight he raviltheth all the affections of the soul to him, and then beginneth the soul to know him spiritually, and to love him burningly : Then seeth the soule somewhat of the nature of the blessed Divinity of Jesus how that he is all, and that he worketh all, and that all good deeds that are done, and good thoughts are onely of him : for he is all Sovereigne might, and all Sovereign verity, and all Sovereign goodnesse : And therefore every good deed is done of him and by him ; And he alone shall have the worship and the thanks for all good deeds, and nothing else but he ; for though wretched men steal his worship here for a while, yet at the last end shall verity shew full well that Jesus did all, and man did right nought of himselfe : And then shall the theeves of Gods goods that are not reconciled to him here in this life be judged to death for their sins : And Jesus shall be fully worshiped, and thanked of all blessed creatures for his working. This love is nothing else but Jesus himselfe, that for love worketh all this in mans soul, and reformeth it in feeling to his likenesse, as I have said before, and somewhat more shall say. This love bringeth into the soul the perfection of all vertues, and maketh it all clean and true, soft and easie, and turneth it all into love and into



into liking. And in what manner he doth that I shall tell thee a little hereafter. This love draweth the soule from vaine beholding of worldly things, into Contemplation of spirituall creatures, and of the secrets of God, from sensuality into spirituality, from earthly feeling into heavenly favour.

## CHAP. V.

*How that some soules love Jesus by bodily fervours, and by their owne humane affections, that are moved by grace and by reason. And how some love him more quietly by spirituall affections onely moved inwardly through spiritual grace of the holy Ghost.*

*\*Refffully.*

**T**herefore I may truly say, that he that hath most of this love here in this life most pleaseth God, and shall have most cleare sight of him, and most fully love him in the blisse of heaven, for that he hath the greatest gift of love here in earth. This love cannot be had by a mans owne travell, as some imagine; It is freely had by the gracious gift of Jesus after much bodily and spirituall paines going before; For there are some lovers of God that make themselves to love God as it were by their owne might; for they streine themselves through great violence, and pant so strongly, that they burst into bodily fervours, as if they would draw God downe from heaven to them: And they say in their hearts, and with their mouth, Ah Lord! I love thee, and I will love thee, and I will suffer death for the love of thee; And in this manner of working they feelee great fervour, and much grace. And true it is, I thinke this working good and *\*meritorious*, if it be well tempered with Humility and discretion; But yet these men love not, nor have the gift of love on that manner that I speake of, neither do they aske it so: For a soule that hath the gift of love through gracious beholding of Jesus, as I meant,

*\*Medeful.*

or that soule that hath it not yet, but would have it, she is not busie to straine her selfe above her strength, as it were by bodily might, for to have it by bodily fervours, and so far to feele the love of God, but thinketh her selfe to be right nought, and that she can doe right nought of her selfe; but as it were a dead thing, onely depending and borne up by the mercy of God. She seeth well that JESUS is all, and doth all, and therefore asketh she nought else but the gift of love; for since the soule seeth that her owne love is nought, therefore she desireth his love, for that is enough. Therefore she prayeth and desireth that the love of God would touch her with his blessed light, that she may see a little of him by his gracious presence, for then should she love him: and so by this way cometh the gift of love, which is God, into a soule. The more that a soule noughteth it selfe through grace by sight of this Verity, sometime without any fervour shewed outwardly, and the lesse that it thinketh that it loveth or seeth God, the nearer it \* approacheth for to perceive the gift of this blessed love; for then is love Master, and worketh in the Soule, and maketh it forget it selfe, and for to see and looke on onely how love worketh; and then is the SOULE more suffering then doing, and that is pure love. Thus Saint Paul meant when he said thus; *Quicumque spiritu Dei aguntur*, &c. *They that are wrought by the spirit of God, are Gods Rom. 8. sonnes.* That is, Soules that are made so humble, and so \* plyable to GOD, that they worke not of themselves, but suffer the Holy Ghost to stirre and worke in them the feelings of love with a sweet cord to his stirrings. These are in a speciall manner Gods sons most like unto him.

\*Nyghebb.

\*Buxome.

Other soules that cannot love thus, but travell themselves by their owne afflictions, and stirre themselves through their owne thinking of GOD and bodily exercise, for to draw out of themselves by mastery the feeling of love, by fervours, and other bodily signes, these love not spiritually.

Q

They

They do well and meritoriously, if so be they understand humbly that this their working is not the kindly gracious feeling of love, but is an humane acting of the soule at the bidding of reason; And nevertheless, through the goodness of God, because the soule doth as much as in it is, these humane affections of the soule stirred into God by mans working are turned into spirituall affections, and are meritorious, as if they had been done spiritually in the first beginning. And this is a great courtesie of our Lord shewed to humble soules, which turneth all these humane affections of naturall love into the affection, and into the \* reward of his owne love, as if he had wrought them all fully by himselfe. And so these humane affections thus turned may be called affections of spirituall love through purchase, not through kindly bringing forth of the holy Ghost. I say not that a soule can worke such humane affections onely of it selfe without grace; for I wote well that St. Paul saith, that we can doe just nought, nor thinke any thing that is good of our selves without grace. *Non enim quod sumus sufficientes, &c.* Not as if we were sufficient of our selves to thinke any thing as of our selves, but all our sufficiency is of God. For God worketh in all both good worke and good will, as St. Paul saith; *It is God that worketh in us both to will and to doe, according to his good pleasure.* But I say that such affections are good, being made by the will and endeavours of a soule according to the generall grace that he giveth to all chosen soules, not of speciall grace made spiritually by the touching of his gracious presence, as he worketh in his perfect love, as I said before; for in unperfect lovers love worketh \* at a distance by humane affections; but in perfect lovers love worketh nearly by her owne spirituall affections, and killeth in a soule for the time all other affections both carnall naturall, and humane; and that is properly the working of love by it selfe. Thus love may be had in \* some measure, in part, here in a pure soule through the spirituall sight of Jesus; but in the blisse of heaven it is fulfilled by cleare sight in

\* Mede.

1 Cor. 3.

\* Ferly.

\* In little.

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in his God-head ; for there shall none affections be felt in a soule but such as are divine and spiritual.

### CH A P. VI.

*That the gift of love amongst all other gifts of Jesus is most worthy and most profitable ; And how Jesus doth all that is well done in his lovers , onely for love ; And how love maketh the exercise of all vertues and all good deeds light and easie.*

**A**Ske then of God nothing but this gift of love, which is the holy Ghost : For among all the gifts that our Lord giveth there is none so good , nor so profitable, so worthy , nor so excellent as this is. For there is no gift of God that is both the giver and the gift, but this gift of love : and therefore it is the best and the worthiest. The gift of prophesie, the gift of working miracles , the gift of great knowledge , and counsell , and the gift of great fasting ; or of great penance doing , or any other such , are great gifts of the holy Ghost , but they are not the holy Ghost , for a reprobate and damnable soule may have all these gifts as well as an elect soule. And therefore all these kinde of gifts are not greatly to be desired or cared for much. But the gift of love is the holy Ghost , God himselfe , and him can no soule have and withal be damned : For that gift alone saveth from damnation, and maketh it Gods Son , and a \* receiver of the heavenly heritage. And that love , as I have said before, is not the affection of love that is created in a soule, but it is the holy Ghost himselfe , that is love uncreated, that saveth a soule. For he first giveth himselfe to that soule before the soule loveth him , and he formeth the affection in the soule , and maketh the soul to love him onely for himselfe. And not onely so, but also by this gift the soule loveth it self, and her neighbour as her selfe onely for God. And this is the gift

\* Perceiver.



—of love that maketh the distinction betwixt chosen and reprobate soules ; And this gift maketh perfect peace betwixt God and a soule , and uniteth all blessed creatures wholly in God ; for it maketh Jesus for to love us, and us him also , and each of us to love one another in him.

Plal. 45.

Covet this gift of love principally, as I have said ; for if he please out of his grace to give it thee on that manner, it shall open and enlighten the reason of thy soule , to see Verity , that is God , and spirituall things : And it shall stirre up thy affections wholly and tully for to love him ; And it shall worke in thy soule onely as he will , and thou shalt behold Jesus reverently , with softnesse of love , and see how he worketh. Thus commandeth he by his Prophet that we should do , saying thus ; *Vacate & videte quoniam ego sum Deus* ; Cease yee, and see that I am God. That is , yee that are reformed in feeling , and have your inner eye opened into sight of spirituall things , cease ye sometime from outward working , and see that I am God: That is, see onely how I Jesus God and Man do ; Behold ye me, for I doe all , I am love , and for love I do all that I do , and ye do nought. And that this is truth , I shall shew you , for there is no good deed done by you , nor good thought felt in you, but what is done by me ; That is , through power, and wisdom, and love mightily, wisely , and lovely, else it is no good deed. But now is it true that I Jesus am both power, and wisdom, and blessed love, and ye are nought , for I am God. Therefore may you easily see that I do all your good deeds , and all your good thoughts , and all your good loves in you, and ye do right nought. And yet neverthelesse be all these good deeds called yours ; Not because ye worke them principally , but for that I give them unto you for love that I beare to you. And therefore since I am Jesus , and for love doe all this , cease then yee from beholding of your selves , and set your selves at nought, and looke on me , and see that I am God, for I doe all this. This is some-what of the

the meaning of that verse of *David* before said.

See then and behold what love worketh in a chosen soule, which hee reformeth in feeling to his likenesse: When the reason is enlightned to the spirituall knowing of *JESUS*, and to the feeling of his love. Then bringeth love into the soule the perfection of vertues, and turneth them all into \* quietnesse, and into liking, as it were, without working of the soule; for the soule striveth not much for the getting of them, as it did before; but it hath them easily, and feeleth them restfully, onely through the gift of love, that is the Holy Ghost. And that is a very great comfort and gladnesse unspeakable, when she feeleth suddenly in her selfe (and scarce knowes how) the vertues of Humility and Patience, sobriety and \* stayednesse, chastity and purity, and love to her Neighbour. And all other vertues, which were sometime travellous, painefull, and hard for to keepe, are now turned into \* easinesse, and liking, and into wonderfull lightnesse, insomuch that she thinketh it no mastery, nor difficulty to keepe every vertue, but it is most pleasing to him to keepe it, and all this is made by love.

\* *Sofnesse.*

\* *Sadnesse.*

\* *Sofnesse.*

Other men that stand in the way of common charity, and are not yet got so farre in grace, but worke under the command of reason, they strive and fight all day against sinnes for the procuring of vertues; and sometime they be above, and sometime beneath as wrestlers are.

These men doe full well, they have vertues in reason, and will, not in favour, nor in love. For they fight with themselves as it were by their owne might for them; therefore cannot they fully have rest, nor perfectly the higher hand. Nevertheless they shall have \* great reward, but they are not yet humble enough. They have not yet put themselves altogether into *GODS* hand, for they see him not yet.

\* *Full mede.*

But a soule that hath spirituall sight of Iesus taketh no great care of striving for Vertues for that time. He is not busie about them particularly, but he maketh it all his businesse to keepe that sight, and that beholding of J E S U S, which it hath for to hold the minde stably thereto, and binde his love onely to it, that it fall not from it, but forget all other things as much as it can. And when it doth thus, then is Iesus verily Master against all sins, and overshadoweth it with his blessed presence, and getteth it all vertues. And the soule is so comforted and so borne up with the \* restfull feeling of love that it hath of the sight of J E S U S, that it feeleth no great disease outwardly. And thus doth love generally slay all finnes in a soule, and reformeth it in the new feelings of Vertues.

\* Soft.

## C H A P VII.

*How love through gracious beholding of J E S U S slayeth all stirrings of pride; and maketh the soule to loose the savour and delight in all earthly \* honours.*

\* Worship.

Love slayeth pride.

**N**Everthelesse I shall tell thee more particularly how love killeth finnes in a soule, and reformeth vertues. And first of Pride, and the vertue contrary thereto, viz. Humility; Thou must understand that there be two kinds of Humility; One is had by working of reason; Another is felt by the speciall gift of love. Both are of love, but the former love worketh by, and with the reason of the soule, and the latter love, worketh by her selfe. The first is imperfect, the other is perfect. The first a man feeleth from the beholding of his own sins and wretchednesse, through the which beholding he thinketh himselfe unworthy to have any gift of grace, or any reward of God, but thinketh it enough that he would of his great mercy grant

grant him forgivenesse of his sinnes ; And also he thinketh himselfe because of his sins, to be worse then the greatest sinner that liveth, and that every man doth better then he. And by such beholding thrusteth he himselfe downe in his thoughts under all men : And he is busie to withstand the stirrings of pride as much as he can, both bodily and spiritual pride, and despiseth himselfe so that he assenteth not to the feelings of pride. And if his heart be taken sometimes with it, that it be defiled with vaine joy of worship and praise from others ; or from the conceit of his wit, or of any other thing, as soone as he perceiveth it he is \* displeased with himselfe, and hath sorrow for it in heart, and asketh forgivenesse for it of God, and sheweth himselfe to his Confessor, and accuseth himselfe humbly, and receiveth his penance. This is good humility, but it is not yet perfect humility ; for it is of soules that are beginning and profiting in grace caused by the beholding of their sins ; Love worketh this humility by reason.

\* Evil paid.

Perfect humility a soule seeleth from the sight and spirituall knowing of Jesus ; for when the holy Ghost lightneth the reason into the sight of Verity, how Jesus is all, and that he doth all, the soule hath so great love and so great joy in that spirituall sight ( for it is really so indeed ) that it forgetteth it selfe, fully leaneth to Jesus with all the love that it hath to behold him. It taketh no \* heed of any unworthinesse of it selfe, nor of sinnes afore done, but setteth at nought it selfe, with all the sinnes, and all the good deeds that ever it did, as if there were nothing but Jesus. Thus was David humble when he said thus ; *Et substantia mea tanquam nihilum ante te.* And my substance is as nothing before thee ; That is, Lord Jesus, the sight of thy blessed uncreated substance, an of thine endlesse being sheweth well unto me, that my substance and being of my soule is as nought in regard of thee.

\* Kepe.

Also such a soule in respect to his Neighbour hath no regard to him, nor judging of him, whether he



Isa. 40.

be better or worse then himselfe ; for he esteemeth himselfe and all other men to be all alike , and to be just nought of themselves in regard of God ; ( and this is very so . ) For all the goodnesse that is wrought in himselfe or in others , is onely of God , whom he beholdeth as all in all . And therefore setteth he all other creatures at nought , as he doth himselfe . Thus humble was the Prophet , when he said thus ; *Omnes gentes quasi non sint sic sunt coram eo* , &c. *All nations are before our Lord as if they were not , and are reputed* as \* nothing , and as a vaine thing . That is , in \* comparison of the endlesse being , and the unchangeable nature of God , man-kinde is as nought ; for of nought was it made , and to nought shall it returne , unlesse he keep it in its being that made it of nought . This is truth , and this should make a soule humble , if by grace it could see this truth . Therefore when once love openeth the inner eye of the soule , for to see this truth , with other circumstances that attend it , then beginneth the soule to be really humble ; for then through the sight of God it seeleth and seeth it selfe as it is : And then doth the soule forsake the beholding and leaning upon it selfe ; and fully falleth to the beholding of Jesus ; And when it doth so , then setteth the soule nought by all the joy and worship of the world , for the joy of worldly worship is so little , and so nought , in regard of that joy , and of that love that it seeleth in the spiritual sight of Jesus , and knowledge of the truth , that though it might have it without any sin , he would have nothing to do with it . No , though men would worship him , praise him , and favour him , or set him in great state , it would nothing at all please him ; No , though he had great skill in all the seven liberal Sciences , and of all skill under the Sun , or had power to work all manner of miracles , yet would he take no more \* delight in all this , nor no more favour , then to gnaw on a dry stick : He had \* rather forget all this , and to be alone out of the sight of the World , then to thinke of them , and be worshiped of all men ; for the heart of a true lover

\* Innoteful.

\* Anentes.

\* Dainty.

\* well le-  
ver.;

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ver of Jesus is made so much, and so large through a little sight of him, and a little feeling of his spiritual love, that all the liking and all the joy of all the earth cannot suffice to fill a corner of it. And then appeareth it well that these wretched worldly lovers, that are as it were ravished with the love of their owne worship, and pursue after it to have it with all the might and all the wit they have, they have no taste of this Humility; but are wondrous farre from it. But the lover of J E S U S hath this humility lastingly, and that not with heaviness and striving for it, but with liking and gladness. The which gladness he hath not therefore, because he forsaketh the worship of the World, for that were a proud humility belonging to an Hypocrite; but because he hath a sight and a spirituall knowing of the verity and worthiness of J E S U S through the gift of the Holy Ghost. That reverent sight, and that lovely beholding of J E S U S comforteth his love so wonderfully, and beareth it up so mightily and so *\* easily*, that verily it cannot like, nor fully rest in any earthly joy, nor would he if he could: He maketh no matter whether men praise him or *\* dispraise* him, worship him or despise him; as to himselfe he sets it not to heart, neither to be *\* well pleased* (for his greater humiliation) when men despise him, nor to be displeased when men worship him or praise him. He had rather forget both the one and the other, and onely thinke on Jesus, and get humility by that way. And that is much the securer way whosoever can attaine to it. Thus did David when he said; *Oculi mei semper ad Dominum*, &c. My eyes are alwayes to the LORD, for he shall plucke my feete out of the net. For when he doth so, then forsaketh he utterly himselfe, and *\* casteth* himselfe wholly under Jesus, and then is he in a secure guard; for the shield of Truth, which he holdeth, keepeth him so well, that he shall not be hurt through any stirring of pride, as long as he holdeth himselfe within the shield: As the Prophet saith; *Scuto circumdabit te veritas ejus*, &c. Psalm 90.

*\* Sonly.*

*\* Lacke.*

*\* Well paid.*

Psalm 14.

*\* under.*

*\* casteth.*

Verity

\* Umbilicyppe.

Verity shall \* compass thee with a shield. And that is, if thou leaving all other things, onely beholdest him ; for then shalt thou not dread for the night's dread ; that is, thou shalt not feare the spirit of pride, whether he come by night or by day, as the next verse saith thus ; *A sagitta volante in die, from the arrow that flieth by day.* Pride cometh by night to assayle a soule when it is despised and contemned of other men, that thereby it should fall into heaviness and into sorrow : It cometh also as an Arrow flying on the day, when a man is praised and worshiped of all men ; whether it be forwardly doing or spirituall, that he should have vaine joy in himselfe, and to rest therein, and false gladnesse in a thing that is passing. This is a sharp Arrow, and a perilous ; it fleeth swiftly, and it striketh softly, but it woundeth deadly. But the lover of Jesus, that stably beholdeth by devout prayers, and busie thinking on him, is so \* incompassed with the safe shield of truth, that he dreadeth it not ; for this arrow cannot enter into his soule. Nay, though it come, it hurteth him not, but \* glaunceth away, and passeth forth.

\* Umbilaped.

\* Glenceth.

And thus is the soule made humble as I understand by the working of the holy Ghost, that is the gift of love ; for he openeth the eye of the soule to see and love Jesus, and he keepeth the soule in that sight restfully and securely : And he slayeth all the stirrings of pride wonderfully, and privily, and softly, and the soule \* knoweth not how. And also he bringeth in by that way verily and lovely the vertue of humility. All this doth love, but not in all lovers alike fully ; for some have this grace but short and little, as it were in the beginning of it, and a little assaying toward it : for the conscience is not yet cleansed fully through grace. And some have it more fully, for they have clearer sight of Jesus, and they seele more of this love. And some have it most fully, for they have the full gift of *Contemplation*. Neverthelesse he that hath the least on this manner that I have said, I hope verily he hath the gift of perfect humility, for he hath the gift of perfect love.

\* Woteib.



CHAP. VIII.

*How love slayeth all stirrings of wrath and envy \* easily, and reformeth in the soule the vertues of peace, and patience, and of perfect charity to his Neighbour, as he did specially in the Apostles.*

**L**OVE, where it worketh, worketh wisely and \* easily *\* Sostly.*  
 in a soule; for he slayeth mightily anger & envy, and *Love slayeth anger and envy.*  
 all passions of wrath and melancholly in it, and bringeth into the soule the vertues of patience and mildnesse, peaceablenesse, and amity to his Neighbour. It is full hard, and a great mastery for a man that standeth onely in working of his owne reason to keepe patience, holy rest, and softnesse in heart, and charity to his Neighbour, when they use him hardly, and do him wrong, that he do not through motion or rising of anger or \* bitternesse within him something against them, either by word, or deed, or both. (*\* Melancholly.* And neverthelesse though a man be stirred and troubled in himselfe, and made unrestfull, if so be it passeth not too much the bounds of reason, and that he keepe his hands and his tongue, and be ready to forgive the trespassse when forgivenessse is asked, yet this man hath the vertue of patience, though it be but weak and nakedly: Forasmuch as he desires to have it, and laboureth busily in restraining his unruly passions, to the end that he may have it, and also is sorry that he hath it not as he should.) But to a true lover of Jesus it is no great mastery for to suffer all this, for why? Love fighteth for him, and slayeth wondrous easily such stirrings of wrath and of melancholly: And maketh his soule so easie, and so peaceable, so suffering, and so goodly, through the spiritual sight of Jesus, with the feeling of his blessed love; that though he be despised and contemned of other men, or suffer wrong, or harme, shame, or villany, he \* heedeth it not, he is *\* Chargeab.*  
 not



\* *Mercy.*  
\* *Well le-*  
*ver.*

\* *Liking.*

\* *Kepe.*  
\* *Hangeth.*

† *Lever.*

not much stirred against them, he will not be angered nor stirred against them; for if he were much stirred, hee should forgo the comfort which he seeleth within his soule, but that will he not. He can lightlier forget all the wrong that is done him; then another man can forgive it, though \* forgivenesse was asked him: And so he had \* rather forget it; for he thinketh it most easie to him. And love doth all this, for love openeth the eye of the soule to the sight of J E S U S, and establisheth it with the \* pleasure and content of love that it seeleth by that sight, and comforteth it so mightily, that it taketh no \* heed what ever men tangle or do against him; it \* resteth nothing upon him: The greatest harme that he can suffer is a forbearing of the spirituall sight of Jesus. And therefore it is † better for him to suffer all harmes then that alone. All this can the soule doe well and easily without great disturbing of this spirituall sight, when the grievances fall outwardly, and touch not the body, as do backbitings, or scornings, or spoyling of his goods: All these grieve him nought; but it goeth some-what nearer when his flesh is touched, and he seeleth smarr, then is it harder.

Nevertheless, though it be hard and impossible to the fraile nature of man to suffer bodily penance gladly and patiently, without bitter stirrings of ire, anger, and melancholly, yet it is not impossible to love, that is the Holy Ghost for to worke this in a soule, when hee toucheth it with the blessed gift of love. But he giveth a S O U L E that is in that plight mightily the feelings of love, and wonderfully fasteneth it to J E S U S, and separateth it very farre from sensuality through his secret might, and comforteth it so sweetely by his blessed presence, that the soule seeleth little paine, or else none at all in the sensuall part: and this is a speciall grace given to the holy Martyrs.

This Grace had the Apostles, as holy Writ saith of them thus; *Ibant Apostoli gaudentes, &c. The Apostles*

*Apostles went from the Councell rejoycing, when they were beaten with scourges, and they were glad that they were accounted worthy to suffer any bodily paine for the love of JESUS. They were not stirred to anger, nor to \*bitternesse, to be revenged \*Felines.* on the JEWEES that beate them, as a worldly man would be when he suffered a little harme, were it never so little from his Neighbour. Nay they were not stirred to any pride, nor highnesse of minde, nor to disdain or judge the JEWEES, as Hypocrites and Hereticks are who will suffer much bodily paine, and are sometimes ready to suffer Death with great gladnesse, and with mighty will, as it were in the Name of JESUS, for love of him: Verily that love and that gladnesse that they have in suffering of bodily mischiefe is not of the Holy Ghost, it cometh not from the Fire that burneth on the high Altar of Heaven, but it is feigned by the Enemy, enflamed of Hell; for it is fully mingled with the height of pride, and of presumption of themselves, of despight, and judging, and disdain of those that thus punish them. They imagine that all this is charity, and that they suffer all that for the love of God, but they are beguiled by the mid-day Fiend.

A true lover of JESUS, when he suffereth harme from his Neighbour, is so strengthened through grace of the Holy Ghost, and is made so humble, so patient, so peaceable, and that so really, that what harme or wrong soever he suffereth from his Neighbour, he still preserveth his humility, he despiseth him not, he judgeth him not, but he prayeth for him in his heart, and hath pittie and compassion on him much more tenderly, then of another man that never did him harme; and verily loveth him better, and more fervently desireth the salvation of his soule, because he seeth that we shall have so much spirituall profit out of that evill deed of that man though it be against his will.  
But

But this love and this meeknesse is wrought onely by the holy Ghost above the nature of man in them, whom he maketh true lovers of Jesus.

## CHAP. IX.

*How Love slayeth Coveteousnesse, Lechery and Gluttony, and the fleshly delight and savour in all the five bodily senses, softly and easily, through a gracious beholding of Jesus.*

*Love slayeth Coveteousnesse.*

**C**oveteousness also is slain in a soul by the working of love, for it maketh the soul so covetous of spiritual good, & so inflamed to heavenly riches, that it setteth right nought by all earthly things : It hath no more joy in the having of a precious stone, then a chalke stone ; no more love hath he in an hundred pounds, then in a pound of lead ; It setteth all things that must perish at one price, he heedeth no more the one then the other, as to his love ; for he knows well that all these earthly things which worldly men set so great price by, and love so dearely, must passe away, and turne to nothing, both the thing it telse, and the love of it : And therefore he worketh his thoughts betimes into that judgement and esteeme of them which they must come to hereafter, and so accounteth them as nought. And when worldly lovers strive, and fight, and plead for earthly goods, who may first have them : The lover of Jesus striveth with no man, but keepeth himselfe in peace, and is well contented with that which he hath, and will strive for no more, for he thinketh that he needs no more of all the riches on earth, then a scanty bodily sustenance for to sustaine his bodily life withall, as long as it pleaseth God, and that he can easily have. And therefore would he have no more then he barely needeth for the time, that he may freely be discharged from

from the trouble of keeping, and spending of it, and fully give his heart and his businesse about the seeking of Jesus, for to finde him in cleannesse of spirit; for that is all his coveteousnesse; For why? only the clean in heart shall see him.

Also the fleshly love of Father and Mother, and other worldly friends hangeth not upon him; It is even cut from his heart with the sword of spiritual love, so that he hath no more affection to Father or Mother, or to any worldly friend then he hath to another man, except he see or feel in them more grace or more vertue then in other men, or except that his Father or Mother hath the fesse same grace that some other men have: But if they be not so, then loveth he other men better then them, and that is Charity. And thus doth Gods love slay coveteousnesse of the world, and bringeth into the soule poverty of spirit: And that doth love not onely in them that have right nought of worldly goods, but also in some creatures that are in great worldly state, and have earthly riches to spend. Love slayeth in some of them coveteousnesse so farre forth, that they have no more liking nor savour in having of them then of a straw; No, though it should so happen that they should lose them through default of those that should looke after them, yet set they nought thereby. For why? the heart of Gods lover is through the gift of the holy Ghost taken so fully with the sight of the love of another thing, which is Jesus, and that is so precious and so worthy, that it will receive no other love to rest in it that is contrary thereto.

*Love slayeth natural affections.*

And not onely doth love this, but also it slayeth the liking of Lechery, and all other bodily uncleannesse, and bringeth into the soule true chastity, and turneth it into liking. For the soule feeleth so great delight in the sight of J E S U S, that it liketh for to be chaste, and it is no great difficulty to it to keepe chastity, for therein is most ease and most rest.

*Love slayeth Lechery.*

And in the same manner the gift of love slayeth the lusts of Gluttony, and maketh the soule sober, and temperate; gluttony.

*How love slayeth*



temperate, and beareth it up so mightily, that it cannot rest in the liking of meate and drinke: But it taketh such meate and drinke, what ever it be, as least hindereth or chargeth the bodily complexion, if it can easily come by it; nor for the love of it selfe, but for the love of God. On this wise the lover of God seeth well, that he needeth to sustaine his bodily life with meate and drinke, as long as God will suffer them to continue together. Here then will be the discretion of the lover of J E S U S, as farre as I understand, that hath feeling and working in love, that in what manner he may best keepe his grace whole, and be least letteth from working in it through taking of bodily sustenance, so shall he do. That kinde of meat, which least letteth and least troubleth the heart, and may keep the body in strength, be it Flesh, be it Fish, be it Bread and Ale, that I suppose the soule chooseth for to have, if it can come thereby: For the whole businesse of the soule is to thinke on Jesus with reverent love, constantly, without letting of any thing, if that it might. And therefore since it must needs be letteth some-what and hindered, the lesse it is letteth and hindered by meate or drinke, or any other thing, the better it is. It had rather use the best meate and most costly, if it lesse hinder the keeping of his heart, then to take onely bread and water, if that hinder him more; for he hath no regard for to get great merit by the paine of fasting, and be put thereby from softnesse and quietnesse of heart, but all his businesse is for to keepe his heart as stably as he can in the light of Jesus, and in the feeling of his love. And surely I am of the opinion, that he may with lesse lust and liking use the best meate, that is good in his kinde, then another man that worketh all by reason without the speciall gift of love can use the worst: Ever excepting such meate as is drest with art and curiosity onely for lust, for such manner of meate cannot at all accord with him. And also on the other side, if little meate, as onely bread and beere, most helpeth and quieteth his heart, and keepeth

keepeth it most in peace, that is most acceptable to him for to use; and namely, if he feele his bodily strength sustained thereby, and have the gift of love withall.

And yet doth love more, for it slayeth sloth, and *Love slay-*  
 fleshly idlenesse, and maketh the soule to be occupied *eth sloth &*  
 in goodnesse, and namely inwardly in beholding *idlenesse.*  
 of him; by vertue whereof the soule hath savour and  
 spirituall delight in praying, in meditating, and in  
 all manner of doing that belongeth to him to doe  
 according to the state he is in, without heaviness or  
 painefull bitternesse, whether he be religious or se-  
 cular.

Also it slayeth the vaine likings of the five bodily *Love slay-*  
 senses. As first of the sight of the eyes, so that the *eth the de-*  
 soule hath no liking in the sight of any worldly thing, *light of the*  
 but seeleth rather paine and disease in beholding *five senses.*  
 of it, be it never so faire, never so precious, never  
 so wonderfull. And therefore as wordly lovers  
 runne out sometimes for to see new things, for to  
 wonder at them, and so for to feed their hearts with  
 the vaine sight of them; Right so a lover of Jesus is  
 busie for to runne away, and withdraw himselfe from  
 the sight of such manner of things, that the inner  
 sight be not letted; for he spiritually seeth another  
 manner of thing, which is fairer, and more wonder-  
 full, and that would he not forbear.

Right on the selfe-same wise is it of speaking, and  
 hearing; It is a paine to the soule of a lover of Jesus  
 for to speake or heare any thing that might let the  
 freedome of his heart from thinking on Jesus, what  
 ever Song, or Melody, or \* Musicke outward it be, \* *Minstrel-*  
 if it hinder the thought that it cannot freely and rest- *ly*  
 fully pray, or thinke of him, it liketh him  
 right nought. And the more delectable it is  
 to other men, the more unfavoury it is to him. And  
 also to heare any manner of speaking of other men,  
 unlesse it be some-what touching the working of his  
 soule into the love of J E S U S, it liketh him right  
 R nought,

\* *Cr. ft.*

nought, he is right soone weary of it : He had rather be in peace, and heare right nought, nay speak right nought, then for to heare the speaking and the teaching of the greatest Clerke on earth, with all the reasons that he can say to him by humane wit, except he can speake feelingly and stirringly of the love of J E S U : for there lyes his \* skill principally. And therefore would not he speake of any thing else, nor heare, nor see any thing, but what might helpe him, and further him into more knowledge, and to better feeling of him.

\* *Lever.*

Of worldly speech it is no doubt that he hath no favour in speaking, nor in hearing of it, nor in worldly tales, nor tidings, nor in any such vaine jangling that belongeth not to him. And the same is of smelling, and tasting. The more the thoughts are distracted and broken from spirituall rest by the use either of smelling, or tasting, or of any of the senses, the more he avoydeth it. The lesse that he feeleth of them, the \* better he is. And if he could live in the body without the feeling of any of them, he would never feele them, for they trouble the heart oft times, and put it from rest ; but they cannot fully be eschewed. Neverthelesse the love of Jesus is sometimes so mighty in a soule, that it overcometh and slayeth all that is contrary thereto for a time.

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## CHAP. X.

*What vertues and graces a Soule receiveth through opening of the inner eye into the gracious beholding of Jesus ; and how it cannot be gotten onely by mans labour, but through speciall grace and his owne labour also.*

**T**Hus worketh love in a soule, opening the ghostly eye into the beholding of Jesus, by inspiration of special

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speciall grace, and maketh it pure, subtle, and able to the worke of *Contemplation*. What this opening of the spirituall eye is the greatest Scholar on earth cannot imagine by his wit, nor shew fully by his tongue; for it cannot be gotten by study, nor by mans industry alone, but principally by grace of the holy Ghost, and with humane industry. I am afraid to speake any thing of it, for me thinketh that I cannot, it passeth my \* attempt, and my lips are uncleane. \* *Asay.* Nevertheless because it seems to me that love asketh, yea love biddeth that I should, therefore shall I say a little more of it as I hope love teacheth. This opening of the spirituall eye is that lightsome darknesse, and rich nought that I spake of before, and it may be called *purity of spirit, and spirituall rest, inward stillnesse, and peace of conscience, highnesse of thought, and onelynesse of soule, a lively feeling of grace, and \* re- \* Privy.* wrednesse of heart, the watchfull sleepe of the spouse, and *tasting of heavenly savour, burning in love, and shining in light, \* the Gate of Contemplation, and re- \* Entire.* forming in feeling. All these expressions are found in holy writings of diverse men, for every one of them speaketh according to his feeling in grace. And though all these be diverse in shew of words, yet are they all one in meaning and verity; for that soule, which through visiting of grace hath one of them, hath all. For why? a lighting soule to see the face of J E S U S, when it is touched through speciall grace of the Holy Ghost, it is suddenly changed and turned from the state that it was in, into another manner of feeling. It is wonderfully separated and drawn first into it selfe, from the love and the liking of all earthly things, so much that it hath lost the savour of the bodily life, and of all things, save only Jesus. And then is it cleane from all the filth of sinne, so farre forth that the minding of it selfe, and all other inordinate affections to any creature is suddenly washed and wiped away, so that there remaines no middle thing or impediment betwixt Jesus and the soule, but onely the bodily life, and then it is in spiritual rest.



For why? all painful doubts and feares, and all other temptations of spirituall enemies are driven out of the heart, that they trouble not, nor sinke not into it for the time. It is in rest from the annoyance of worldly businesse, and painful hinderances of wicked stirrings; but it is full busie in the free spiritual working of love: And the more it laboureth so, the more rest it feeleth.

This restful labouring is full far from fleshly idleness and from blinde security: It is full of spirituall working, but it is called rest, for that grace looseth the heavy yoke of fleshly love from the soule, and maketh it mighty, and free through the gift of spirituall love for to worke gladly, softly and delectably in all things to which grace stirreth it to worke in. And therefore it is called an holy *Idleness* and a *Rest* most busie, and so it is in regard of *stillnesse* from the great crying of the beastly noise of fleshly desires, and uncleane thoughts. This stillnesse is made by the inspiration of the holy Ghost through the beholding of Jesus. For why? his voyce is so sweet, and so mighty, that it putteth to silence in a soule all the jangling of all other speakers; for it is a voyce of \* power, softly founded in a pure soule, of the which the Prophet saith thus; *Vox Domini in virtute, The voyce of our Lord Jesus is with power.* This voyce is a lively word, and speedy, as the Apostle saith; *Vivus est sermo Dei,* &c. *The word of the Lord is lively, and powerfull, more piercing then any sword is.* Through speaking of this word is fleshly love slaine, and the soule kept in silence from all wicked stirrings. Of this silence it is said in the *Apocalypse* thus; *Factum est silentium in celo,* &c. *Silence was made in heaven as it were halfe an houre.* By heaven is meant a pure soul lifted up through grace from earthly love to heavenly conversation, and so it is in silence. But forasmuch as that silence cannot last whole continually by reason of the corruption of the bodily nature: Therefore it is compared to the time of halfe an hour, a very short time the soul thinketh it to be, though it be never so long; and therefore it is but halfe an hour.

And

\* *Virtue.*

Psalm.

Heb. 12.

And then hath it *peace in conscience*. For why? grace putteth out the gnawing, pricking, striving and fighting of sinnes, and bringeth in peace, and concord, and maketh Jesus and a soule both one in full agreement of will. There is no upbraiding of sins, nor sharp reproving of faults made at that time in a soule, for they have kissed and are made friends, and all is forgiven that was done amisse.

Thus seeleth the soul then with great humble security and great spiritual gladnesse, and conceiveth a full great \* certainty of salvation by this accord making; for it heareth a secret witnessing of the holy Ghost to the conscience, that he is a chosen son to a heavenly heritage. Thus St. Paul saith, *Ipse spiritus testimonium perhibet spiritui nostro, &c. The holy spirit beareth witnesse to our spirit, that we are Gods sonnes.* \* *Boldnesse.*

Rom. 8.

This witnessing of conscience verily felt through grace is the very joy of the soule, as the Apostle saith; *Gloria mea est testimonium, &c. My joy is the witnesse of my conscience:* and that is, when it witnesseth peace, and accord, true love and friendship betwixt Jesus and a soule. And when it is in this peace, then is it in *highnesse of thought*. 2 Cor. 1.

When the soul is bound with the love of the world, then is it beneath all creatures; for every thing goeth over it, and beareth it down by mastery that it cannot see Jesus, nor love him: For even as the love of the world is vain and fleshly, right so the beholding and thinking, & using of all creatures is fleshly; And that is a thraldom of the soul. But then through opening of the spiritual eye into Jesus, the love is turned, and the soule is raised up according to its owne nature above all bodily creatures. And then the beholding and thinking, and the using of them is spirituall, for the love is spiritual. The soul hath then great disdain to be \* obedient to the love of worldly things, for it is high set above them through grace. It setteth nought by all the world; for why? it will all passe away and perish. Unto this highnesse of heart, as long as the soule is kept therein, cometh no errour nor

\* *Buxome.*

Pfal. 53.

deceit of the enemy ; for Jesus is really in sight of the soule at that time , and all other things are beneath it. Of this the Prophet speaketh thus ; *Accedat homo ad cor altum , & exaltabitur Deus.* Let man come to a high heart , and God shall be exalted : That is , a man that through grace cometh to the highness of thought shall see that Jesus is onely exalted above all creatures, and he in him.

\* Homeli-  
nesse.

Hosea 2.

\* Onely-  
steed.

\* Noysous.

\* Privity.

And then is the soule thus set aloft, estranged from the fellowship of worldly lovers , though his body be in the middest among them , full farre is he parted from carnall affections of creatures. He careth not though he never see man , nor speake with him , nor have comfort from him , that he might for ever continue in that spirituall feeling. He seeleth to great \* familiarity of the blessed presence of our Lord Jesus , and so much savour of him , that he can easily for love of him forget the fleshly affection , and the fleshly minde of all creatures. I say not that he shall not love , nor thinke of other creatures , but I say that he shall thinke on them in fitting time , and see them and love them spiritually and freely , not fleshly and painfully , as he did before. Of this Onelynesse speaketh the Prophet thus ; *Ducam eam in solitudinem , &c.* I will lead her into \* solitude , and I will speake to her heart. That is , the grace of Jesus leadeth the soul from \* troublesome company of fleshly desires into Onelynesse of thought , and maketh it forget the liking of the world , and soundeth by sweetnesse of his Inspiration words of love in the eares of the heart. A soule is thus Onely when it loveth Jesus , and attendeth fully to him , and hath lost the savour and the comfort of the world : and that it may better keep this Onelynesse , it fleeth the company of all men as much as it can ; and seeketh Onelynesse of body , which helpeth much to the Onelynesse of the soule , and to the free working of love , the lesse hinderance that it hath from without of vaine janglings , or from within of vaine thinking , the more free it is in spirituall beholding ; And so it is in \* retyrednesse of heart.

A soul

A soule is all without, whilst it is overlayd and blinded with worldly love, it is as common as the high way, for every stirring which cometh from the flesh or from the fiend, sinketh in and goeth through it: But then through grace it is drawn into the privy Chamber, into the light of our Lord Iesus, and heareth his privy counsel, and is wonderfully comforted in the hearing. Of this speaketh the Prophet thus; *Secretum meum mihi, secretum meum mihi; My privy to me, my privy to me.* That is, the lover of Iesus through inspiration of Grace taken up from outward feeling of worldly love, and ravished into the privy of spirituall love, yieldeth thanks to him, saying thus; *My privy to me: That is, my Lord Iesus, thy privy is shewed to me, and privily hid from all lovers of the world; for it is called hidden Manna, which may easier be asked then told what it is.* And that our Lord Iesus promiseth to his lover, saying thus; *Dabo sibi Manna absconditum, &c. I will give her the hidden Manna, which no man knoweth but he that taketh it.* This Manna is heavenly meate, and Angels food, as the Scripture saith; for Angels are fully fed and filled with cleare sight in burning love of our Lord Iesus, and that is *Manna*; for we may aske *what it is*, but cannot know *what it is*. But the lover of Iesus is not yet filled here, but is fed with a little taste of it, whilst he is bound in this bodily life.

Esay 24.

Apoc. 2.

This tasting of this Manna is a lively feeling of grace had through the opening of the spirituall eye. And this grace is not another grace from that which a chosen soule feelth in the beginning of his conversion; but it is the selfe-same grace, onely it is otherwise felt and shewed to a soule: For why? Grace groweth with a soule, and the soule groweth with grace. And the clearer that a soule is parted from the love of the world, the more mighty is its grace, the more inward and more spirituall is the shewing of the presence of our Lord Iesus come to be. So that the same Grace which at first turneth him from sinne, and maketh him beginning and profiting by gifts of vertue and



exercise of good works maketh him also perfect. And that Grace is called a *lively* feeling of grace : For he that hath it feelerh it well, and knoweth well by experience, that he is in grace. It is tull lively to him, for it quickneth the soule wonderfully, and maketh it so whole, that it feeleth no paineful disease of the body, though it be feeble and sickly ; for why ? then is the body most mighty, most whole, and most restfull, and the soule also. Without this grace the soule cannot live but in paine ; for it thinketh that it can keep it for ever, and nothing can put it away : but it is not so, for it passeth away tull easily. Nevertheless though the soveraigne feeling passeth away, and is withdrawn, the \* vertue of it stayeth still, and keepeth the soule in \* sobriety, and maketh it to desire the coming again thereof.

\* *Reliefe.*

\* *Sadness.*

And this is the *waking sleepe of the Spouse*, of the which the Scripture thus ; *Ego dormio, & cor meum vigilat. I sleepe, and my heart waketh* : That is, I sleep spiritually, when through grace the love of the world is slaine in me, and wicked stirrings of fleshly desires are dead, insomuch that I scarce feel them, I am not held by them, my heart is made free : And then it waketh, for it is quick and ready to love JESUS, and see him. The more I sleep from outward things, the more am I awake in knowing of Jesus and of inward things. I cannot be awake to Jesus, except I sleep to the world. And therefore the grace of the holy Ghost \* shutting the fleshly eye, causeth the soule to sleep from worldly vanities, and opening the spiritual eye, keepeth it awake to the sight of Gods majesty \* covered under the cloud of his precious humanity. As the Gospel saith of the Apostles, when they were with our Lord Jesus in his Transfiguration, first they slept ; *Et evigilantes viderunt maiestatem* ; they waking beheld his glory. By sleep of the Apostles is understood the dying of worldly love through inspiration of the holy Ghost ; By their awaking is understood their *Contemplation* of Iesus. Through this sleep the soule is brought into rest from the noyse of fleshly lust and,

Cantic. 5.

\* *Sleeping.*

\* *Healed.*

and through waking it is raised up unto the sight of Jesus and spiritual things. The more that the eyes are shut in this manner of sleep from the appetite of earthly things, the sharper is the inner sight in lovely beholding of heavenly beauty. This sleeping and this waking doth love work through the light of grace in the soule of the lover of our Lord Jesus.

## CH A P. XI.

*How such speciall grace for the beholding of our Lord Jesus is withdrawn sometimes from a soule; and how a soule is to behave her selfe in the absence and in the presence of Jesus: And how a soule shall alway desire (as much as is in her) the gracious presence of Jesus.*

Shew me then a soule that through inspiration of grace hath this opening of the spiritual sight into the beholding of Jesus that is separated and drawn out from the love of the world, so far forth that it hath purity and privity of spirit, spiritual rest, inward silence, and peace of conscience, highnesse of thought, onelynesse and privity of heart, the waking sleepe of the Spouse, that hath lost the liking and joys of the world, taken with delight of heavenly savour, ever thirsting, and softly halting after that blessed presence of Jesus; and I dare boldly pronounce that this soul burneth all in love, and shineth in spiritual light, worthy to come to the name and to the worship of the Spouse; for it is reformed in feeling, made able and ready to *Contemplation.* These are the tokens of inspiration in opening of the spiritual eye. For when the eye is opened, the soule is in full feeling of all the aforesaid vertues for that time.

Nevertheless it falleth out oftentimes that grace withdraweth in part by reason of the corruption of mans frailty, and suffereth then the soul to fall into it self in sensuality, as it was before: and then is the soule in *hede.*

Job 34.  
29.

in paine and in sorrow, for it is blind and unsavoury and can do no good: It is weake, and impotent, encombred with the body and all the bodily senses: It seeketh and desireth after the grace of JESUS againe, and it cannot finde it; for the Scripture saith thus of our Lord; *Postquam vultum suum absconderit, &c.* When our Lord hath hid his face, there is none that can behold him. When he sheweth his face, the soule cannot but see him, for he is light; and when he hideth himselfe it cannot see him, for the soule is darke.

Cantic. 3.

His hiding is but a subtile trying of the soule: His shewing is a wonderfull mercifull goodnesse in comfort of the soule. Wonder not though the feelings of grace be sometimes withdrawn from a lover of Jesus; for holy Writ saith the same of the Spouse, that it saith thus with her; *Quæsiui & non inveni illum, &c.* I sought him, and I found him not; I called, and he answered not. That is, when I fall downe to my frailty, and sinne, then grace with-draweth; for my falling is the cause thereof, and not his flying, but then feele I paine of my wretchednesse in his absence. And therefore I sought him by great desire of heart, and he gave to me not so much as a feeble answer. And then I cryed with all my soule, *Revertere, dilecte mi.* Turne againe thou my beloved: And yet he seemed as if he heard me not. The painfull feeling of my selfe, and the assaying of fleshly loves and sears in this time, and the wanting of my spirituall strength is a continuall crying of my soule to JESUS. And neverthelesse our Lord maketh strange, and cometh not, cry I never so fast; for he is sure enough of his lover, that he will not turne againe to worldly loves quite, he can have no savour in them, and therefore stayeth he the longer.

But at the last when he pleaseth, he cometh againe full of grace, and \* faithfulness, and visiteth the soule that languisheth through desire, by sighings of love after his presence, and toucheth it, and anointeth it full \* gently with the oyle of gladnesse, and maketh

\* Sothfastnesse.

\* Softly.



maketh it suddenly whole from all pain. And then cryeth the soule to J E S U S in a spirituall voyce with a glad heart thus ; *Oleum effusum nomen tuum. Thy name is as oyle powred out.* Cantic. 1. Thy Name is *Jesus*, that is *health*. Then as long as I feele my soule fore and sicke by reason of sinne, pained with the heavy burthen of my body, sorrowfull and fearefull for perils, and wretchednesse of this life, so long Lord J E S U S thy Name is oyle *shut up*, not *powred forth*. But when I feele my soule suddenly touched with the light of thy grace, healed and \* *cured* from all the filth of sinne, and comforted in love and in light with spiritual strength, and gladnesse unspeakable, then can I say with lusty, loving, and spirituall might to thee ; *Thy name O Jesu is to me oyle powred forth.* For by the effect of thy gracious vilitation I feele well the true exposition of thy Name, that thou art *Jesus, health*, for onely thy gracious presence healeth me from sorrow and from sin.

Happy is that soule that is ever fed with feeling of love in his presence, or is borne up by desire to him in his absence. A wise lover is he, and well taught, that soberly and reverently behaveth himselfe in his presence, and lovely beholdeth him without discolate lightnesse, and patiently and easily beareth his absence, without venomous despair, and over painfull bitterness.

This changeability of the absence and presence of J E S U S, which a soule seeleth, is neither the perfection of the soule, nor is it contrary to the grace of perfection or of Contemplation, but onely a state of lesse perfection ; for the more letting that a soule hath of it selfe from the constant feeling of grace, the lesse is the grace ; and yet nevertheless is the grace in it selfe grace of Contemplation. This changeability of absence and presence falleth as well in the state of perfection, as in the state of beginning, but after another manner : For even as there is diversity of feeling in the presence of grace betwixt these two states, right so is there in the absence of grace. And therefore  
he



\* Keeps

nor.

\* Unkinde.

\* Common-  
ing.

\* Meanes.

\* Oonyd.

he that knoweth not the absence of grace is apt to be deceived ; And he that \* makes not much of the presence of grace is \* unthankful to the visiting thereof, whether he be in the state of beginners , or of the perfect. Neverthelesse the more itableness that there is in grace unhurt and unbroken, the lovelier is the soul, and more like unto him *in whom is no changeableness*, as the Apostle saith. And it is very meet that the Spouse should be like her Bridegroom Jesus , in manners and in vertues, fully according to him in itableness of perfect love. But that falleth out seldome here in Spouses of this life ; for he that perceiveth no changeableness in the feeling of his grace , but is all alike whole , stable , unbroken and unhurt , as he thinketh , he is either very perfect, or very blinde : He is perfect, if he be sequestred from all carnall affections , and \* inclinations to creatures , and hath all \* hinderances of corruption and of sinne betwixt Jesus and his soule broken away, and is fully \* united to him with softnesse of love. But this is onely from grace above mans nature. Or he is very blinde if he imagineth himselfe to be in grace without spirituall feeling of Gods inspiration , and setteth himselfe in a way of itableness , as if he were ever in feeling and in working of special grace , imagining all to be grace which he doth, and feeleth both inwardly and outwardly , thinking that whatsoever he doth or speaketh is grace , holding himselfe unchangeable in speciality of grace. If there be any such , as I hope there is none, he is full blind in feeling of grace.

But thou mayest object ; That we ought to live onely by Faith, and not covet spirituall feelings , nor regard them if they come ; for the Apostle saith, *the just shall live by faith.*

Heb. 10.

Unto this I answer, that bodily feelings, be they never so comfortable, are not to be desired nor regarded much if they come; but spiritual feelings, such as I have spoken of, if they come in that manner as I have said, should ever be desired : I meane the killings of all worldly love, the opening of the spiritual eye , purity of

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of spirit, peace of conscience, and all other spoken of before. We should ever covet to feel the lively inspiration of grace made by the spiritual presence of Jesus in our soules, if we could: And for to have him in our sight with reverence, and ever seele the sweetnesse of his love by a wonderful \* familiarity of *\*Homeli- nesse.* his presence. This should be our life and our feeling in grace after the measure of his gift in whom all grace is, to some more and to some lesse; for his presence is felt in diverse manners, as he pleaseth. And in this we should live and worke that which belongeth to us to worke, for without this we should not be able to live spiritually: For as the soule is the life of the body, right so is Jesus the life of the soule by his gracious presence.

And neverthelesse this manner of feeling, though it be never so much, is but in Faith in comparison of that which shall be of the self-same Jesus in the blisse of heaven. Lo this feeling should we desire; for every reasonable soule ought to covet with all its power to approach to Jesus, and to be united to him through feeling of his gracious invisible presence. How that presence is felt may better be known by experience then by any writing; for it is the life and the love, the might and the light, the joy and the rest of a chosen soule: And therefore he that hath once truly felt it cannot forbear it without paine: Neither can he chuse but desire it, it is so good in it selfe and so comfortable. What is more comfortable here for a soule then to be drawn out through grace from the \*noysomness of worldly business, and filth of desires, and from vaine affection of all creatures into rest, and softnesse of spiritual love, secretly perceiving the gracious presence of Jesus, and feelingly fed with the favour of his invisible blessed face? Verily, I thinke nothing can make the soul of a lover full of mirth but the gracious presence of Jesus, as he can shew himself to a pure soul; such an one is never heavy, never sorry, but when he is with himselfe in sensuality. He is never full glad, nor merry. but when he is out of himselfe as being with Jesus in spirit. And *\*Vile noye.*

And yet is that no full mirth, for there ever hangeth an heavy lump of bodily corruption on his soule, and beareth it downe, and hindereth much the spirituall gladnesse, and this must ever be whilst it is here in this life. But whereas I have before spoken of the changeability of grace, how it cometh and goeth, that thou mistake me not; thou must understand, that I mean not of common grace, that it had & felt in faith and in good will to God; without having & lusting of which, and continuing in it none can be saved; for it is in the least chosen soule that liveth: But I meane of speciall grace felt by inspiration of the Holy Ghost in that manner as I have said before. Common grace, which is Charity, lasteth whole whatsoever a man doth, as long as his will and his intent is true to God, which will of his keepeth him from sinning deadly, and the deed that he wittingly doth is not forbidden under a mortall sinne; for this grace is not lost but by mortall finnes. And then is a sinne mortall when his conscience witnesseth with \* deliberation that it is mortall sinne, and yet nevertheless he doth it: or else his conscience is so blinded that he holdeth it no deadly sin, although he doth the deed wilfully, which is forbidden by God and Holy Church as a deadly sin.

\* *Avise-  
ment.*

John 3.

Speciall grace felt through the invisible presence of J E S U S, which maketh a soule a perfect lover, lasteth not ever alike whole in the height of feeling, but changeably cometh and goeth, as I have said before. Thus our Lord saith; *Spiritus ubi vult spirat, &c. The spirit bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest his voyce, but thou knowest not whence he cometh, nor whither he goeth.* He cometh secretly sometimes, when thou art least aware of him, but thou shalt know him full well ere he go; for he wonderfully stirreth, and mightily turneth thy heart into the beholding of his goodnesse, and then doth thy heart melt delectably as wax against the fire into softnesse of his love, and this is the voyce that he foundeth. But then he goeth ere thou perceivest, for he withdraweth himselfe somewhat, not wholly altogether, but from excesse into  
mo:



\* moderation. The height of feeling passeth but the substance and the effect of Grace dwelleth still. And that is as long as the soule of a lover keepeth himselfe pure, and falleth not wilfully into wretchednesse, or \* carelesnes in sensuality, nor to outward vanity, as \* Disso-  
sometime it doth ( though it have no delight therein ) lution.  
out of frailty. This is the changeability of Grace which I meant and spake of.

## CHAP. XII.

*A commendation of Prayer offered up to JESUS by a Contemplative soule, and how stablednesse in prayer is a secure worke to stand in; and how every feeling of Grace in a chosen Soule may be called Jesus: But the more cleane the Soule is, the more worthy the Grace is.*

**T**He soule of a man, whilst it is not touched with speciall grace, is blunt and \* grosse for spirituall \* Boyston:  
worke, and can do nought therein: It skilleth not thereof by reason of its weaknesse: It is both old and dry, undevout and unsavoury in it selfe. But then cometh the light of Grace, and through touching maketh it sharpe and subtle, ready and able to spiri-  
tual worke, and giveth it a great freedome, and a perfect readinesse in will, to be \* plyable to all the \* Buxome:  
stirrings of grace, ready to worke after that grace stirreth the soule: For by opening of the spirituall eye it is wholly applyed to grace, ready to pray. And how the SOULE then prayeth I shall tell thee.

The most speciall prayer that the soule useth, and hath most comfort in I suppose is the *Pater Noster*, or else Psalmes of the Psalter. The *Pater Noster* for unlearned men; and Psalmes and Hymns and other service of *Holy Church* for the learned. The soule prayeth therefore not in that manner as it did before, after  
the



the common way of men by highnesse of voyce, or by reasonable speaking out ; but in full great stilnesse of voyce and softnesse of heart. For why? his mind is not troubled, nor hindred with outward things, but wholly gathered together into it selfe : And the soule is set as it were in the spirituall presence of Jesus, and therefore every word and every syllable is sounded favourly, sweetly, and delectably, with full accord of mouth, and of heart. For why? the soule is then turned all into the fire of love. And therefore every word, that it secretly prayeth, is like a sparke rising out of a burning fire, which \* heateth all the powers of the soule, and turneth them into love, and enlightneth them so comfortably, that the soule listeth ever to pray, and to do nothing else. The more it prayeth the better it may, and the mightier it is. For grace helpeth the soule well, and maketh all things light and easie, that it delighteth to chant and sing the \* praises of God, with spiritual mirth in heavenly delight. This spiritual worke is the food of the soule, and this prayer is of great vertue, for it wasteth and bringeth to nought all secret and open temptations of the Enemy, and slayeth all the minde, and all the liking of the world, and of fleshly sinnes : It beareth up the body and the soul from painful feeling of the wretchednesse of this life : It keepeth the soul in the feeling of grace and working of love, and nourisheth it ever alike hot, as sticks nourisheth the fire. It putteth away all irksomenesse and heavinesse of heart, and holdeth it in strength and spiritual gladnesse.

\* Chaffeith.

\* Lovings.

Psal. 140.

\* weke  
flyghing.

Of this prayer speaketh David thus ; *Dirigatur oratio mea sicut incensum, &c.* Let my prayer be dressed as incense in thy sight. For even as incense that is cast into the fire maketh a sweet smell by the \* smoake rising up to the ayre ; Right so a Psalm favourly and softly sung or said in a burning heart, giveth up a sweet smell to the face of our Lord JESUS, and to all the Court of heaven. There dare no flesh-flye rest upon the pots brinke boyling on the fire ; Even so can  
no

no fleshly delight rest upon a cleane soule, that is all  
 \* bilapped and warmed in the fire of love, boyling and \* Happed.  
 blowing up Psalms and prayers to Jesus. This prayer  
 is alwayes heard of Jesus; It yeldeth grace to Jesus,  
 and receiveth grace againe; It maketh a soule \* famili- \* Homely.  
 liar, and as it were hail-fellow with Jesus, and with  
 all the Angels in heaven, use it who so can: The work  
 is good and gracious in it selfe. And though it be not  
 altogether perfect *Contemplation* in it selfe, nor the  
 working of love by it selfe, neverthelesse it is in part  
*Contemplation*. For why? It cannot be exercised in  
 this manner, but by plenty of grace through opening  
 of the spiritual eye. \* And therefore a soule that hath  
 this freedome, and this gracious feeling in praying  
 with spiritual favour and heavenly delight, hath the  
 grace of *Contemplation* in the manner as it is.

This prayer is a rich offering filled all with fatnesse  
 of devotion, received by Angels, and presented to  
 the face of Jesus. The prayer of other men, who are  
 busie in active workes, is made of two words; for  
 they ostentimes forme in their hearts one word  
 through thinking of worldly businesse, and speak with  
 their mouth another word of the Psalme sung or  
 said: Yet neverthelesse if his intent be true, his prayer  
 is good and \* acceptable, though it lack favour and \* Medeful.  
 sweetness. But this prayer of a Contemplative man is  
 made but of one word; for as it is formed in the heart,  
 right so doth it wholly sound in the mouth, as it  
 were nothing but one and the same thing, both which  
 formeth it and which soundeth it. And verily no  
 more it is, for the soule through grace is made whole  
 in it selfe so far parted from \* sensuality, that it is ma- \* Fleibly-  
 ster of the body, and then is the body nothing else but hede.  
 as an instrument & a trumpet of the soul in the which  
 the soule bloweth sweet notes of spiritual prayers to  
 Jesus. This is the trumpet that David spake of thus;  
*Buccinate in Neomenia, &c. Blow yee the trumpet in the* Psalm. 70.  
*new Moone*: That is, ye soules that are reformed in spi-  
 ritual life through opening of the inner eye, blow ye  
 devoutly the sounding of *Psalmes* with the trumpet  
 S of

of your bodily tongue. And therefore since this prayer is pleasant to J E S U S, and so profitable to the soule, it is good for him who is new converted to God (and desires to please him, and coveteth to have some queint feeling of grace) to covet this feeling, that he may through grace come to this liberty of spirit, and offer his prayers and his Psalmes to Jesus continually and stably, and devoutly, with whole minde and burning affection towards him, so that he may be ready for it through custome when grace will stirre him up thereto. This is a secure feeling, and a true one; if thou canst attain unto it and keep it, thou shalt not need to run about here and there, and aske questions of every spiritual man what thou shouldst do? how thou shouldst love God? and how thou shouldst serve God, and speak of spiritual matters, that passe thy understanding: as perhaps some do. Such kind of doings are not profitable unlesse in case of necessity. Keepe thee to thy prayers \* quietly at first with thy own great industry, that thou mayest afterwards come to this restfull feeling of spiritual prayer, and that shall teach thee wisdom enough in verity without feigning or fancy; and hold thee on in such prayer, if thou hast gotten it, and leave it not; but if grace come otherwayes, and removeth it from thee for a time; causing thee to work on another manner, then mayest thou leave it for a time, and after return again thereto. And he that hath this grace in prayer, asketh not whereupon he should set the point of his thought in his prayer, whether upon the words that he speaketh, or else on God, or on the name of J E S U S, as some aske, for this feeling of grace will teach him well enough. For why? the soule is turned into the eye, and sharply beholdeth the face of Jesus, and is ascertainment that it is Jesus that it seeleth and seeth. I do not meane Jesus as he is in himselfe, in fulnesse of his blessed Godhead; but I meane J E S U S, as he is pleased to shew himselfe to a clean soule, yet in the body according to the cleanness that it hath. For thou must know that every feeling of grace is Jesus, and may be called

\* *Silly.*

Jesus



## The Scale of Perfection.

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Jesus : And according as the grace is more or lesse, so feeleth the soule more or lesse of Jesus. Yea, the first feeling of special grace in a beginner, which is called grace of compunction, and contrition for his sinnes, is verily Jesus. For why? he causeth that contrition in a soul by his presence. But Jesus is then very\* grossly and rudely felt, very far from this spiritual subtlety; for the soul can nor may do no better by reason of its uncleanness. Nevertheless alterward, if the soul profit and encrease in vertues & in cleanness, the same Jesus and none other is seen and felt by the same soule, when it is touched with grace; but that is more spiritually, and neerer to his Divinity. And verily that is the chiefest thing that Jesus loveth in a soule, that it may be made spiritual and divine in sight and in love, like to him in grace, as he is by nature; for that shall be the end of all lovers,

\*Boystously.

Then mayest thou be secure, that at what time thou feelest thy soule stirred by grace, specially in that manner as I have said before, by opening of thy spirituall eye that thou seest and feelest Jesus, hold him fast whilst thou may, and keepe thy selfe in grace, and let him not easily go from thee. Looke after none other Jesus but that same, by feeling of that self-same grace more divinely, that it may encrease in thee more and more. And be not afraid, though Jesus whom thou feelest be not J E S U S as he is in his full God-head, that thou therefore mayest be deceived if thou trust to that feeling; But trust thou well, if thou be a lover of Jesus, that thy feeling is true, and that Jesus is truly felt and seen of thee through his grace as thou canst see him here. And therefore trust fully to thy feeling when it is gracious and spirituall, and keepe it tenderly, and have great dainty, not of thy selfe but of it, that thou mayest see and feel Jesus still better and better. For grace shall ever teach thee by its selfe, if thou wilt fall thereto, till thou come to the end.

But perchance thou beginnest to wonder, why I say one time that grace worketh all this, and another



time that love worketh, or God worketh?

Unto this I answer thus; That when I say that grace worketh, I meane both love, and Jesus, and God; for all is one, and nought but one, Jesus is love, Jesus is grace, Jesus is God. And because he worketh all in us by his grace for love, as he is God, therefore may I use which of these four words I list after my stirring in this writing.

### CHAP. XIII.

*How a soule through the opening of the spirituall eye receiveth a gracious love enabling to understand the holy Scriptures; and how Jesus, that is hid in the holy Scriptures sheweth himselfe to his lovers.*

**W**Hen a soule thus feeleth J E S U S in prayer, he thinketh that he shall never feel otherwise; Neverthelesse it hapneth, that sometimes grace putteth Vocall prayer to silence, and stirreth the soule to see and to feele J E S U S in another manner. And that manner is first to see Jesus in the holy Scriptures; for J E S U S, who is all truth, is hid and \* covered therein, folded in a soft Syndon, under faire words, that he cannot be known nor felt but of a cleane heart. For why? Truth will not shew it selfe to enemies, but to friends, that love and desire it with an humble heart. For Truth and Humility are full true Sisters, fastned together in love and charity, and there is no \* distance of counsell betwixt them two; Humility presumeth upon Truth, and not at all on it selfe; and Truth \* esteemeth well of Humility, so they accord well together. Then so much as the soule of a lover is made humble through inspiration of grace by opening of the spirituall eye, and seeth that it is nought of it selfe, but onely hangeth on the mercy and the goodnesse of Jesus perpetually,

\* Helid.

\* Leyning.

\* Trowyth.

ally, being borne up by the favour and helpe of him  
onely, and truly desiring his presence, therefore  
seeth it Jesus; for it seeth the truth of holy Scrip-  
tures wonderfully shewed and opened above study, and  
industry, and reason of mans natural wit. And that  
may well be called the feeling and the perceiving of  
JESUS; For Jesus is the founaine of Wisdome:  
and by \* pourcing downe of his wisdome into a cleane  
soule, by little and little he maketh the soule wise e-  
nough for to understand all holy Scripture; not all  
at once in speciall beholding, but through that  
grace the soule receiveth a new ability and a gracious  
habite to understand it particularly when it cometh  
to minde. This opening & this clearnesse of under-  
standing is made by the spiritual presence of Jesus;  
for right as the Gospel saith of the two Disciples go-  
ing to *Emaus*, burning in desire, and speaking of our  
Lord Jesus; our Lord appeared to them presently as  
a pilgrime, and taught them the propheties of him-  
selfe: And as the Gospel saith, *Aperuit illis sensum*,  
&c. *He opened their wits, that they might understand the*  
*Scriptures*. Right so the spiritual presence of Jesus  
openeth the wit of his lover, that it burneth in de-  
sire to him, and bringeth to his minde by ministrati-  
on of Angels, the words and sentences of holy Writ  
unsought and unconsidered one after another, and  
expoundeth them readily, be they never so hard nor  
so secret. The harder they be, and farther from mans  
understanding by reason, the more delectable is  
the true shewing of them; When Jesus is the teacher,  
it is expounded and declared *literally*, *morally*, *mysti-  
cally*, and *heavenly*, if the matter will beare it. By the  
*Literall* (which is the easiest and plainest) corporeall  
nature is comforted. By the *Morall*, the soule is in-  
formed concerning vices and vertues, to be able wisely  
to distinguish the one from the other. By the *Mysticall*  
it is enlightned to see the workes of JESUS in  
Holy Church, readily to apply the words of holy  
Writ to Christ our head, and to holy Church which  
is his mystical body.

\* *Heelding.*

The fourth, which is *heavenly*, belongeth only to the working of love, and that is, when all truth in holy Writ is applied to love: And because this is most like to heavenly feeling, therefore I call it heavenly.

John 15.

The lover of Jesus is his friend, not for that he deserveth it, but because Jesus of his mercifull goodness maketh him his friend by true accord. And therefore to him he sheweth his secrets, as to a true friend that pleaseth him by love, not serveth him through feare in slavery. Thus he saith himselfe to his Apostles; *Jam vos dixi amicos quia quaecunque audivi a patre meo nota feci vobis.* Now have I called you friends, for I have made known unto you all that I have heard of the Father. To a cleane soule, whose palate is purified from filth of fleshly love, holy Writ is lively food and sustenance delectable: It savoureth wonderfull sweetly when it is well chewed by spiritual understanding. For why? The spirit of life is hid therein, that quicknerh all the powers of the soule, and filleth them full of sweetnesse of heavenly favour and spiritual delight. But verily he must have white teeth, and sharp, and well picked, that can bite of this spiritual bread; for fleshly Lovers and Hereticks may not touch the inward floure of it: Their teeth are bloody, and full of filth, therefore must they be fasting from feeling of this bread. By teeth I understand the inward senses of the soule, which in fleshly Lovers and Hereticks are bloody, full of sinne, and worldly vanities. They would, but they cannot come through curiosity to the truth in knowing of holy Writ; for their senses are corrupted by Original and Actual sin, and are not yet healed through grace. And therefore they do but gnaw upon the outward bark, speak they never so much thereof. The inner favour within they taste not of. They be not humble, they be not pure for to see it. They be not friends to Jesus, and therefore he sheweth them not his counsel. The mystery of holy Writ is closed under a key, and sealed with a signet of Jesus finger, which is the holy Ghost, and there-



therefore without his love and his leave may none come in. He alone hath the key of \* skill in his keeping, as holy Writ saith, and he himself is the key : And he letteth in whom he will by inspiration of his grace, and breaketh not the Seale.

\* *Cunning.*

And this doth Jesus to his lovers, but not to all alike, but to them that are specially inspired for to seek Truth in holy Writ, with great devotion in praying, and with much businesse in studying going before. These may come to the finding of it, when our Lord will be pleased to shew it. See now then how grace openeth the spirituall eye, and cleareth the senses of the soule wonderfully above the frailty of corrupt nature. It giveth the soule a new ability whether it will read holy Writ, or heare it, or meditate in it, for to understand truly and savourly the truth of it in the manner abovesaid. And also for to turne readily all reasons and words that are literally spoken into spiritual understanding. And that is no great wonder, for the same spirit that made the Scriptures, expoundeth it and declareth it to a cleane soule for its comfort, viz. the holy Ghost.

And this Grace may be, and is, as well in \* Laymen as in the learned ; as to the substance and true feeling of the verity and spiritual savour of it in general, though they see not so many reasons in special ; for that needeth not. And when the soule is thus enabled, and enlightned through grace, then he chuseth to be alone sometimes, out of the letting \* and med-

\* *Lewd men.*

ling with all creatures, that he may freely \* exercise his Instrument, which I call his reason in beholding of verity which is contained in holy Scriptures. And then will there fall into his minde words, and reasons, and sentences enough to busie him, and that full orderly and full seriously. And what comfort and spiritual delight, what savour and sweetnesse a soul can then feele in that spiritual exercise through diverse illuminations, inward perceivings, secret knowings, and sudden touchings of the holy Ghost a soule can onely know by experience, and not otherwise. And I hope

\* *Commoning.*

\* *Assay.*



Psal. 119.

I Cor. 13.

that he shall not erre, if so be his teeth, that is his inward senses be kept white and cleane from spirituall pride, and from curiosity of his natural wit. I believe David felt full great delight in this manner of working, when he said thus; *Quam dulcia faucibus meis Eloquentia tua, &c.* How sweet are thy words unto my taste? sweeter then honey to my mouth. That is, Lord Iesus, thy holy words endited in holy Writ brought to my minde by grace are sweeter to my taste, that is the affections of my soule, then honey is to my mouth. Verily this is a faire worke without painfull travell for to see Iesus thus. This is one manner of sight of Iesus, as I said before; not as he is, but clothed under the likenesse of workes and of words, *per speculum, in Aenigmate; In a glasse, and by a likenesse*, as the Apostle saith. Iesus is endlesse might, wisdom and goodnesse, righteousnesse, truth, holinesse, and mercy. And what this Iesus is in himselfe can no soule see nor heare; but by the effects of his working may be seene through the light of grace: As thus his might is seene by making of all creatures of nothing; His wisdom in orderly disposing of them; His goodnesse in saving of them; His mercy in forgiveness of sinnes; His holinesse in gifts of grace; His righteousnesse in severely punishing of sinne: His gentlenesse in true rewarding of good workes; And all this is expressed in holy Writ, and this a soule seeth there with all other attributes that pertaine thereto. And be thou well assured, that such gracious knowings in holy Writ, or in other Writings, which are made by the assistance of Gods grace, are nought else but sweet Letters sent and made betwixt a loving soule and Iesus the beloved: Or else, that I may speake trulyer, betwixt Iesus the true lover, and the soules beloved of him. He hath full great tendernesse of love to all his chosen children, that are here closed in clay of this bodily life. And therefore though he be absent from them, high, hid above in the bosome of the Father, filled with the delights of the blessed God-head, yet notwithstanding he thinketh

eth upon them, and visiteth them full oft through his gracious spiritual presence, and comforteth them by his Letters of holy Writ, and driveth out of their hearts heaviness and wearisomness, doubts and fears, and maketh them truly glad and merry in him, believing in all his promises, and humbly continuing fulfilling his will.

Saint Paul saith thus; *Quæcunque scripta sunt, &c.* Whatsoever things are written, are written for our instruction, that we might have hope through the comfort of the Scriptures. And this is another worke of Contemplation to see Iesus in the Scriptures after the opening of the spiritual eye. The cleaner the sight is in beholding, the more comforted is the affection in tasting; A full little savour felt in a clean soul of holy Writ in this manner abovesaid, should make the soule set little price by knowing of all the seven liberal Arts, or of all the world, or all worldly wisdom; for the end of this knowing is the salvation of a mans soule in everlasting life: and the end of that other knowledge, as to himselfe, is but vanity and a fading delight, unlesse by grace it be turned to this end.

Rom. 15.

## CHAP. XIV.

*Of the secret voyce of Iesus sounding in a soule, and how it may be knowne: And how all the gracious Illuminations made in a soul be called the speakings of Iesus.*

**L**oe these are faire new feelings in a cleane soule; and if a soule were filled with such, it might be said and that truly, that it were reformed somewhat in feeling, but not yet fully; for why? yet Iesus sheweth more, and leadeth the soul inward, and beginneth to speake more familiarly, and more lovely to a soule, and maketh it more ready to follow the stirrings of grace. For the Prophet saith, *Quocunque ibat spiritus illud gradie-*

**Ezek. 1.** *gradiebantur & rote sequentes eum : Whithersoever the spirit went, thither went the wheels following him.* By wheels are understood the true lovers of J E S U S, for they are round in vertue, without angle of forwardnesse; and lightly whirling through readinesse of will after the stirrings of grace; for according as grace stirreth and teacheth, so they follow and worke, as the Prophet saith.

But first, they have a full secure experience, and a true knowing of the voyce of grace, ere they do so; that they be not deceived by their owne feigning, or by the mid-day fiend. Our Lord Jesus saith thus of his lovers; *Oves mee vocem meam audiunt, &c. My sheep heare my voyce, and I know them, and they know me.* The privy voyce of J E S U S is full true, and it maketh a soule true, there is no feigning in it, nor no fancy, nor pride, nor hypocrisie; but gentlenesse, humility, peace, love, and charity: And it is full of life, love, and grace. And therefore when it soundeth in a soule, it is of so great power sometimes, that the soule suddenly layeth aside all that was in hand, as praying, speaking, reading, or thinking, in the manner abovesaid, and all manner of bodily worke, and listneth thereto fully, hearing and perceiving in rest and in love the sweet\* sound of this spirituall voyce, as it were ravished from the minde of all earthly things. And then in this quiet, Jesus sometimes sheweth himselfe as an\* awefull Master, and sometimes as a reverend Father, and sometimes as a lovely Spouse: And it keepeth a soule in a wonderful reverence, and in a lovely beholding of him, that the soule liketh well then, and never so well as then; for it feeleth so great security, and so great rest in J E S U S, and so much favour of his goodnesse, that it would ever be so, and never do other worke. It thinketh that it toucheth J E S U S, and through vertue of that unspeakable touching, it is made whole and stable in it selfe, reverently beholding J E S U S onely, as if there were nothing but J E S U S, one thing, and himselfe another, borne up onely by the favour

\*Steven.

\*Hawful.



favour and the wonderful goodness of him; that is, that thing that he seeleth & seeth. And this feeling is oft-times without special beholding of holy Writ, and but with few words formed in the minde; onely there falls in among sweet words, according to the feeling either of loving, or worshipping, or admiring, or otherwise sounding, as the heart liketh. The soule is very much separated from love or liking of the world, through vertue of this gracious feeling, and also very much from minding of the world in that time; It taketh no heed thereof, for it hath no time there-to: But then sometime anon, together with this, falleth into a soule diverse illuminations through grace, which I call the speakings of Jesus, and the sight of spiritual things: For be thou assured, that all the businesse that Jesus maketh about a soule, is for to make it a true perfect Spouse to him in the height and the fulnesse of love, and that cannot be done so suddenly; Therefore J E S U S, who is love, and of all lovers the wisest, proveth by many wayes, and by many wonderful meanes ere this can come about. And therefore that it may come to the effect of true espousing, he hath such gracious speakings of a wooer to a chosen soule; He sheweth his privy jewels; many things he giveth, and more he promiseth; and sheweth courteous dalliance: He often visiteth her with much grace, and spiritual comfort, as I have said before; but how he doth this in particular I cannot fully tell thee, for it needeth not: Neverthelesse some what shall I say according as grace enableth me.

The drawing of a soule fully to perfect love, is, first by the shewing of spiritual things to a cleane soule, when the spiritual eye is opened; not that a soule should rest therein, and make an end there, but should by that search him and love him who is highest of all, without any beholding of any other thing then he.

But thou wilt aske, what are these spiritual things, because I speak so oft of spiritual things?

To this I say, that spiritual things may be said all  
the



the truth of holy Scripture. And therefore a soul that through light of grace can see the truth of Scripture, seeth spiritual things, as I have said before.

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C H A P. XV.

S E C T. I.

*How through gracious opening of the spiritual eye a soule is made wise, humbly and truly to see the diversities of degrees in holy Church, as militant, and for to see the nature of Angels, and first of the reprobate.*

**N** Eeverthelesse other spiritual things there be also, which through light of grace are shewed to the soule, and are these; the nature of all reasonable souls, and the gracious workings of our Lord Iesus in them. The nature of Angels, both good and bad, and their workings, and the knowledge of the blessed Trinity, according as grace teacheth. Holy writ saith of the Spouse thus in the Canticles; *Surgam & circuibo civitatem, &c. I will arise, and go about the City, and will seeke him whom my soule loveth.* That is, I will rise into highnesse of thought, and go about the City. By this City is understood the University of all creatures, corporal and spiritual, ordered and ruled under God by lawes of Nature, of reason, and of grace. I goe about this City, when I behold the natures and the causes of bodily creatures, the gifts of grace, and the blisses of spiritual creatures: And in all these I seek him whom my soule loveth. It is pleasant looking with the inner eye on Iesus in bodily creatures, to see his power, his wisdom, and his goodnesse, in ordering of their natures; but it is much more beautiful to look on Iesus in spiritual creatures: First in reasonable soules, both elect and reprobate, to see the mercifull calling of them to election, how he turneth them from sin by the light of his grace, how he helpeth them, teacheth

Cantic. 3.

cheth them, chastneth them, comforteth them, he sanctifieth, cleanseth, and feedeth them ; how he maketh them burning in love and in light through plenty of his grace. And thus doth he not to one soul only, but to all his chosen according to the measure of his grace.

Also concerning the Reprobate, he seeth how justly he forsaketh them, and leaveth them in their sins, and doth them no wrong : How he rewardeth them in this world, suffering them to have the fulfilling of their own will, and after to punish them endlessly. Loe this is a little beholding of holy Church, whilst it is militant in this life, by seeing how black and how soule it seemeth in soules that are reprobate ; and how fair and how lovely it is in chosen soules.

And all this spiritual sight is nought else, but the sight of Jesus, not in himself but in his merciful secret works, and in his righteous judgements every day shewed, remembred and renewed to reasonable soules. Moreover, to see with the spiritual eye the pains of the reprobate, and the joy and blisse of chosen soules is full comfortable : For truth cannot be seen in a clean soule without great delight, and wonderfull content of blessed burning love.

Also the sight of the nature of Angels, first of the damned, then of the blessed : As it is a full pleasant Contemplation concerning the Devil in a clean soule ; When grace bringeth the Fiend into the sight of the soule, as a clumid Caitiffe bound by the power of Jesus that he cannot hurt ; Then the soul beholdeth him not bodily, but spiritually, seeing his nature, and his malice, and turneth him upside downe, and spoyleth him, and renteth him all to nought, scorneth him, and despiseth him, and setteth nought by his malice. Thus biddeth holy Writ when it saith thus ; *Verte impium & non erit. Turne the wicked,* Prov. 22. that is, the Fiend, upside downe, and he shall be as nought. Much wonder hath the soule that the Fiend hath so much malice, and so little might : There is no creature so weake as he is ; And therefore it is great cowardize, that men feare him so much.

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He can do nothing without leave of our Lord Jesus, not so much as enter into a Swine, as the Gospel saith, much lesse can he do then to annoy any man.

And therefore if our Lord Jesus give him leave to  
 \*Taryens. \*tempt us, it is full worthily and mercifully done, that he doth so; and therefore welcome be our Lord Jesus by himselfe, and by all his messengers. The soule feareth no more the blustering of the Fiend then the stirring of a Mouse. Wondrous wrath is the fiend when we say nay to his temptations, but his mouth is stopped with his owne malice: His hands are bound like a Thieves, worthy to be judged and hanged in Hell. And then the soule accuseth him, and doth justly condemn him, according to his deserts. Wonder not at this saying, for St. Paul meant the same, when he said thus; *Fratres nescitis, &c. Brethren know yee not that we shall judge the Angels? viz.* Those that are wicked spirits through malice that were made good Angels by nature. As who should say, yes; This judging is figured before the day of judgement in *Contemplative* soules; for they teele a little tasting in likenesse of all that shall be done afterwards of our Lord Jesus openly in truth: Shamed and shent is the Fiend greatly in himselfe, when he is thus \*used by a cleane soule: He would faine flye away, but he cannot, for the power of the highest holdeth him still, and that grieveth him more then all the fire of Hell. Then falleth the soule wonderfully humble under Jesus with hearty praises, for that he so mightily saveth a simple soule from all the malice of so \*cruell an enemy by his great mercy.

\*Fared.

\*Fell.

## S E C T. II.

*How by the same light of Grace the nature of the blessed Angels is seene; And how JESUS is God and Man above all creatures, according to that which the soule may see of him here.*

**A**ND then after this by the self-same light may the soule spiritually see the beauty of the Angels, the worthinesse of their nature, the subtlety of their substance, their confirming in grace, their fulnesse in endlesse blisse, the diverlity of their orders; The distinctions of persons, how they all live in light of endlesse truth; And how they burne all in love of the holy Ghost, according to the worthinesse of their orders; How they see, and love, and praise Jesus in blessed rest without ceasing. There is no sight of a body, nor any figure in imagination, in this manner of working, but all spiritual, and of spiritual creatures.

Then beginneth the soule to have great acquaintance and great fellowship with the blessed spirits; They are full tender and full busie about such a soule to helpe it, they are Masters to teach it: And often by their spiritual presence and touching of their light, drive out fancies from the soule: They enlighten the soule graciously: They comfort the soule with sweet words suddenly sounded in a cleane heart. And if any disease fall spiritually, they serve the soul, and minister to it all that it needeth. Thus St. Paul said of them; *Know yee not that they are all ministering spirits, Heb. x. sent for them who shall be heires of salvation?* As if he had said thus; know ye, that all this spiritual working of words and of reasons brought to the minde, and such faire likenesse are made by the ministry of Angels, when the light of grace abundantly shineth in a cleane soule,



soule. It cannot be told by tongue the feelings, the enlightnings, the graces, and the comforts in speciall, that cleane soules perceive by the favourable fellowship of blessed Angels: the soule is so well pleased with beholding what they do, that it would willingly attend to nothing else.

But then with the help of Angels the soule yet seeth more; for knowing in a cleane soul riseth higher above all this, and that is to behold the blessed nature of Jesus; First of his glorious humanity, how it is worthily exalted above the nature of Angels, and afterward of his blessed Divinity, for by knowing of creatures is known the Creator; and then beginneth the soule to perceive a little of the mysteries of the blessed Trinity. And this it may do well enough; for the light of grace going before, she cannot erre, as long as she holdeth her in that light. Then is opened really to the eye of the soule the unity in substance, and distinction of persons in the blessed Trinity, as it may be seen in this life, and much other truth of the blessed Trinity pertinent to this matter; the which is openly declared and shewed by writings of holy Doctors of holy Church. And be you assured, that one and the same verity concerning the blessed Trinity that these holy Doctors inspired through grace writ in their Books for the strengthening of our truth, a cleane soule may see in knowing through the same light of grace. I will not expresse too much of this matter here in particular for it needeth not.

Wondrous great love feeleth the soule with heavenly delight in feeling of this truth, when it is wrought through speciall grace; for love and light go both together in a cleane soul. There is no love that riseth out of knowing, and from special beholding that can sooner touch our Lord then this can: For why? This knowing of Jesus God and Man, is alone in it selfe the worthiest and the highest, if it be specially shewed by the light of grace. And therefore is the fire of flaming love hereof more burning then it is of any creature corporeal or incorporeal. And all these gracious know-  
ings

ings of the Univerſity of all creatures felt in a ſoule in manner aboveſaid, and of our Lord J E S U S the maker and keeper of all this faire Univerſity, I call faire words, and ſweet ſpeakings of our Lord J E S U S to a ſoule, which he means to make his true Spouſe. He ſheweth his myſteries, profereth rich gitts out of his treaſury, and arrayeth the ſoule with them full \* beautiſully : She need not thenceforward be aſhamed of the company of her fellows, to appeare before the face of J E S U S her Spouſe. All this lovely dalliance of private conference betwixt J E S U S and a ſoule may be called an hidden word ; of the which the Scripture ſaith thus, *Porro ad me dictum eſt verbum abſconditum*, Job 4. &c. *Moreover to me there was ſpoken a ſecret word, and the veines of his* \* *whiſpering mine eare hath percei-* \* *Rowning.*  
*ved.* The inſpiration of J E S U S is a hidden word, for it is privily hid from all lovers of the world, and ſhewed to his lovers ; through which a cleane ſoule perceiveth readily the veines of his \* whiſpering, that is the ſpeciall ſhewings of his truth ; for every gracious knowing of truth felt with inward favour and ſpirituall delight, is a privy whiſpering of J E S U S in the eare of a clean ſoule. He muſt have much clea- neſſe, and humility, and all other vertues, and muſt be halfe deaſe to the noyſe of worldly janglings, that will wiſely perceive thoſe ſweet ſpiritual whiſper- ings, that is the voyce of J E S U S. Of the which David ſaith thus ; *Vox Domini preparantis cervos*, &c. Pſal. 48: *The voyce of the Lord prepareth Harts, and ſhall diſ-*  
*cover thicke woods.* That is, the inſpiration of Je- ſus maketh ſoules light as Deere, that ſtart from the ground over buſhes and bryars of all worldly vanities ; And he ſheweth to them the thicketts, that is, his my- ſteries, which cannot be perceived but by a ſharpe eye. Theſe beholdings ſolidly grounded in grace and humi- lity, make a ſoule wiſe and burning in deſire to the face of J E S U S. Theſe are the ſpiritual things that I ſpake of before, and they be called new gracious feelings ; and I doe but touch them a little for \* direction of a ſoule ; for a ſoule that is pure, ſtirred \* *Wyſſing.*

up by grace to use this working, may see more of such spiritual matter in an hour then can be writ in a great Booke.

Thus finisheth this present Book, which expoundeth many notable doctrines in Contemplation, which to me seemeth right expedient to those that set their felicity in busying themselves specially for their soules health.

*Infinite laud with thankings manifold,  
I yeeld to God, me succouring with his grace;  
This Booke to finish, which, as yee behold,  
Scale of Perfection's call'd in every place:  
Whereof th' Author Walter Hilton was,  
And Wynkin de Word this hath set in print;  
In William Caxton's house, so fell the Case,  
God rest his soule, in joy there may it flint.*

*This heavenly Booke more precious then gold  
Was lately directed with great humility;  
For godly pleasure thereon to behold,  
Unto the right noble Margaret as ye see,  
The Kings Mother of excellent bounty,  
Harry the seventh, that Jesus him preserve,  
This mighty Princesse hath commanded me  
T' imprint this Booke, her grace for to deserve.*

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*F I N I S.*

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ANOTHER  
**TREATISE**

Of the same  
**AUTHOR**

Written to a Devout man  
of secular Estate,

Teaching him how to lead a spi-  
rituall life therein.







C H A P. I.

*That he, who intends to become a spiritual man, must first use much bodily exercise in penance, and in destroying of sin.*

*Dear Brother in Christ,*



Here be in the holy Church two kinds of life, by the which Christian souls do serve and please God, and procure their own salvation; The one is corporal, the other spiritual.

Corporal working appertaineth principally to the men and women of the world, who for the nature of their estate do lawfully use worldly goods, and intermeddle and deale with worldly businesses and affairs. This life also belongeth to all young beginners in spirituality, who be but newly converted from sensual and worldly sins to the service of God; and this life is to dispose and enable such persons for spiritual working, by taming the body by corporal workes and exercises, and thereby bringing it into obedience and subjection to the Spirit, whereby it may become supple and ready, and not much contrarious to the Spirit in her spiritual exercisings; for as St. Paul saith, that *woman was made for man, and not man for woman*; Even so corporal working was

ordained for spiritual, and not spiritual working for corporal. Corporal working is to go before, and spiritual working cometh after, as the same Saint Paul saith in these words; *That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is sensible (or corporal) afterwards cometh that which is spiritual*: And the reason why it should be so is this, that we are borne in sin, and in corruption of the flesh, by the which we are in soules so blinded and so overlaid, that we neither have the spiritual sight or knowing of God by light of understanding, nor the spiritual tasting or feeling of him by a clean desire of loving; and therefore we cannot suddenly start out of the dark night of this fleshly corruption into the spiritual light; for we are not as yet able to endure such spiritual light, by reason of the sicknesse of our soules, any more then we can with our bodily eyes, when they are sore, behold and look upon the light of the Sun; and for that cause we must expect and worke by degrees, and processe of time. First, by corporal works diligently, till we be discharged, or much lightened, or eased from this heavy burthen of sin and sensuality, that hindereth us from spiritual working; and till our soules be some-what cleansed from great outward sinnes, and enabled for spiritual workings.

By the corporal working that I speak of, thou must understand, that I meane all manner of good workes or deeds that thy soule doth by the senses, or the members of thy body, either upon, or towards thy selfe, as in fasting, watching or in restraining of thy fleshly or sensual desires, by penance doing, or other acts of mortification: Or upon, or towards thy christian brother, in performance of the works of mercy, spiritual or corporal: Or to or towards God himselfe, by suffering (for the love of him and his justice) all manner of bodily paines and afflictions that shall occur for thee to undergo, either as immediately from his owne hands, or by the meanes, and from the hands of other creatures of his. All these kind of workes done in faith, and out of charity (without which

which they are of no worth) doe please G O D. Therefore who so desireth to become a spiritual man, it will be securest and profitable for him, that he be first, for a long time, well exercised in these corporal workings, for these corporall deeds are practices and tokens of morall vertues, without which a soule is not able to worke spiritually: Breake downe first pride within thee, by bodily sufferings and bearings, and also by thinking in thy minde of something that will helpe to humble thee; and moreover, by eschewing and avoyding all ostentations, boastings, or praising of thy self, either privately by thy selfe in thy minde, or by thy words, or external deeds, or carriage towards, or with others; by this means casting away, and mortifying within thee all vain-glory, and complacence in thy selfe for any talent, gift, or thing corporall, or spiritual, that God hath bestowed on thee: Also mortifie and destroy within thee, so soon as thou art able, all envy and anger towards thy Christian brethren, whether they be rich or poor, good or bad, hate them not, nor disdain them, nor willingly offend them by words, or by deeds. Likewise destroy and mortifie in thee all coveting of worldly goods, and see, that neither for the getting, or holding, nor saving of them, thou do not offend thy conscience, nor break charity with God, or thy christian brother, for the love of any earthly thing; but what thou gettest, or hast, keep it without inordinate love or affection to it, and spend it as reasonable occasions shall require, for the honour of God, and the succour of thy christian brother: Mortifie also and destroy as much as thou canst, all yeelding to bodily sloth, and unnecessary bodily ease, and the sensuall vices of gluttony and luxury, with the inordinations that rise out of them. And after that thou hast been well exercised and tryed in all such kind of corporal works, thou mayest then by the grace of God, ordain thee, and apply thee to spirituall working: The grace and goodnesse of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he hath shewed to thee, in withdrawing of thine heart from the love and liking



of worldly vanity, and from the use of fleshly and sensual finnes, and in turning of thy will intirely to his service, bringeth into mine heart much matter to love him in his mercy, and also it greatly moveth and urgeth me to strengthen thee in thy good purpose, and in the work which thou hast begun between thee and God, so that it may be brought to a good end, and so far as may be in my power to help thee in it, and my best endeavours in it I shall most willing afford thee, first and principally for the service and honour of God, and next in requitall of thy tender affection of love thou bearest to me, though I be a wretch, and unworthy of thy love or favour, I know well the desire of thy heart, as how that thou greatly covetest to serve our Lord both in soule and body, fully and wholly, without intermeddling or troubling thy selfe with worldly businesses, that so thou mayest, by the grace of God, attaine to more knowledge, and spiritual feeling of God, and of spiritual things. Such desire of thine is (as I hope) good, and from God, for it is set upon him in charity spiritually. Neverthelesse as in regard of externall matters and workings in them, such desire of thine is to be moderated and ruled with discretion, according to the nature and quality of thy estate, which thou art to regard in thy spiritual intentions; for charity unrul'd, that is, not rightly ordered, turneth sometimes into a fault or vice: And therefore it is said of our Lord by an holy soule in the holy Scripture, *He hath ordered charity in me*; that is to say, our LORD giving to me charity, hath set it in order and good rule within me, whereby it might not erre in its exercise, nor be lost through my indiscreet doings. Even so the said desire and charity which our Lord hath wrought in thee, out of his goodnesse and mercy, must be so ruled and moderated, that in the exercises of it, it do regard the nature of thy estate and condition of life, and the manner of living, which in former time thou hast held, and the measure and quantity of vertues that

that now are in thee. Thou must not altogether follow thy said desire, in giving over, or neglecting those businesses and cares of the world that are necessary, and do belong to thee, either for the upholding of thy owne person in his degree, or in the ruling or ordering of other persons or things that pertain to thy charge, and give thee wholly to retiredness, spiritual devotions, and holy meditations, as if thou wert a Frier or a Monke, or another man, that were not bound (as thou art) to the world by children or servants; for it is not for thee to doe so, and if thou dost, then keepest thou not the order of Charity. Also if thou wouldst altogether leave and forbear all spiritual exercises (especially now after the grace and calling that God hath given thee for them) and give thy selfe wholly to the businesses of the world, in fulfilling of the workes of the active life, as fully as doe other men, that never felt such devotion, nor had such grace or calling as thou hast, thou doest then leave the order of Charity; for thy state requireth of thee to attend each of them in divers times: Thou shalt mingle the works of the active life, with the spiritual workes of the contemplative life, and then thou dost well; for thou shalt sometimes be busie, with *Martha*, for to order and govern thine household, thy children, thy servants, thy neighbours, and thy tenants: If they do well, comfort and helpe them therein, if they do amisse, then tell and teach them for their amendment, and chastise them as there shall be cause. Thou shalt also wisely looke after, and know thy things, and thy worldly goods, as that they be well and duly used or preserved by thy servants, well ordered, and reasonably spent, whereby thou mayst the more plenteously, out of thy temporal means, fulfill the deeds of mercy and charity towards thy Christian brethren. Also thou shalt sometimes, with *Mary*, leave, or lay aside the businesses of the world, and shalt sit down at the feet of our Lord with humility, in prayers, and holy thoughts, and in *Contemplation* of him, according to the grace that he shall

shall give thee for it, and so thou shalt goe from that one to that other, profitably and fruitfully, and fulfil them both : and so doing, thou observeest well the order of charity.

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## CHAP. II.

*To what kinde of men the active life pertaineth.*

**B**Ut that thou mayest the lesse wonder at that that I have said, and that thou mayest better understand the reason thereof, therefore I shall declare the matter a little more fully to thee. Thou must understand, that God is served by three kinds of life, as either by an active life, or by a contemplative, or by a third, that is mixed of them both, and therefore is commonly called a mixt life. The active life belongeth to worldly men and women that are grosse and ignorant, as to the understanding or knowledge of spiritual exercises or wayes, for they neither feel nor taste devotion by fervour of love as other men do, nor can they well conceive what it is, or how it may be come by; and neverthelesse, they have in them the feare of God, and of the paines of Hell, and therefore they eschew and forbear sinne, and have a desire for to please God, and to attain to heaven, and a good will they beare to their Christian brethren; Unto these men it is needfull and speedfull to use the workes of the active life, as diligently as they can in the help of themselves and of their christian brethren, for more they cannot do.

CHAP.



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CHAP. III.

*To whom the Contemplative life appertaineth.*

**T**He contemplative life appertaineth onely to such men and women, as for the love of God have forsaken all notorious sinnes, both of the flesh, and of the world, and have given over all intermeddling with the affairs and businesses of the world, or with worldly goods, as also all care and charge over others; and all superiority, or offices, that concern the government of others (if ever they had any such) and make themselves poore, and as it were, naked from all the things of this life, save for what their corporall nature doth meerly need, and of necessity require. Unto these men and women it appertaineth diligently and seriously, to employ themselves in internall exercises, for to get thereby (through the grace of our Lord) cleannesse in heart, and peace in conscience, by destroying of sinne, and gaining of vertue, and so to come to Contemplation; since such cleannesse (necessary for Contemplation) cannot be had without much exercise of body, and continuall travell, or industry in spirit, by devout prayers, fervent desires, and spiritual meditation.

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CHAP. IV.

*To whom appertaineth the mixt life.*

**T**He third kinde of life, that is called the mixt life, belongeth to Prelates of holy Church, and to Pastors and Curates, who have charge and superiority over other men or women, for to teach and govern them, both as to their bodies, and as to their  
soules,



soules, and principally to animate and guide them in the performance of the deeds of mercy, both corporal and spiritual towards their christian brethren. Unto these men of the mixt life, it appertaineth sometime to use the works of mercy in active life, in helpe and sustenance of themselves, and of their subjects, and of others also, and sometime for to leave all manner of external busineses and to give themselves to contemplative exercises, as to prayer, and meditations, reading of holy Scriptures, or other good bookes, or to some other spiritual exercises, according to what they shall feel themselves disposed. Also this mixt life appertaineth to some temporal men, who are owners of much land and goods, and have withal some dominion or mastership over other men, for to govern and sustain them; as a father hath over his children, and a master over his servants, & a Lord over his tenants, the which men have received also of our Lords gift, the grace of Devotion, and in some measure a taste and practice of spiritual exercise: Unto these men, I say, belongeth the foresaid mixt life, that is both active and contemplative; for if these men having (as they have) such external charge and cares lying on them, out of some obligation or necessity, would altogether leave, or neglect such charge and busineses of the world pertaining to them, and give themselves wholly to the exercises of contemplative life, they would not do well in so doing, for they observe not the order of charity; for charity (as thou well knowest) consisteth in the love of God, and of thy christian brethren: And therefore he that hath charity in him, will not by occasion of his devotions, used immoderately towards God, omit that which he ought to do towards his christian brother, but will serve both God and them for God, at diverse times, as now the one, and then the other; for he, that for the loving of God in *Contemplation*, leaveth the loving of his Christian brethren, and doth not perform towards them that which he ought, and is bound unto, he fulfilleth not the rule and obligation

obligation of charity. Likewise on the contrary side, who so hath so great a regard to the works of the active life, and to the businesse of the world, that for the love of his christian brethren, and the serving of them, he leaveth or neglecteth all spiritual exercises, God having given him a call thereunto, he fulfilleth not charity, and so saith St. Gregory. For though our Saviour Christ, for to stir up some to use the mixt life, tooke upon himselfe the person of such manner of men, i. e. both of Prelates, and of such other as are of the said mixt estate, and gave them example by his owne working, that they should upon occasion use the exercises of the mixt life, as he himself did at those times that he spoke with men, and medled with them, shewing and exercising his deeds of mercy towards them, taught the ignorant by his preaching, visited the sick, and healed them of their diseases, fed the hungry, and comforted the sorrowful: Neverthelesse at other times he left the conversation of worldly men, and even of his owne Disciples, and went into the desert upon the hills, and continued there all night all alone in prayers, as the Gospel testifieth to us. And this mixt life did our Lord in himselfe exercise, and shew in the same manner, for an example to all other men that have taken on them the state or condition that requireth the exercises of the said mixt life, that is to say, that they should sometimes apply themselves to the externall affairs and busineses belonging to their charge, and to the curing of such their christian brethren as pertain to them to look to, instruct, or provide for; and this to do, according to reason, and discretion, and their need; and at another time to give themselves to devotion, and to the exercises of a *Contemplative* life, being principally (as before I have said) reading and praying.

## CHAP. V.

*How holy Bishops held and used the said mixt life.*

**T**He said mixt life did holy Bishops hold and lead, who had charge over mens soules, and had the ministration and disposall of temporall goods; for those holy men did not wholly forsake the administration, looking to, and the disposal of worldly goods, and give themselves altogether, or unreasonably to Contemplation, notwithstanding the grace and gift they had for Contemplation; but very often, left their owne rest in Contemplation (which for their parts they had much rather have continued in still) for the love and service of their christian brethren, and were contented to intermeddle with worldly busineses, for succouring and helping of those that were under their charge: and surely such doing of theirs was true charity. For justly and discreetly did they divide the time of their life into two parts, whereof the one they bestowed in the lower part of love and charity, that is to say, in the workes of the active life (for they were bound thereto by taking on them their Prelacy:) and another part of their time they spent in the higher part of love and charity, and that was in the contemplation of God, and of spiritual things, by prayers and holy recollections; and so they had and held charity to God and their christian brethren, both interiorly in affection of soule, and also exteriorly by doing & performing good corporal, or external works. Other men that were onely contemplatives, and were free from all cares and Prelacies, they also had charity towards God and their christian brethren, but it was onely interiorly in the affection of their soule, and not used outwardly in corporal deeds; & it may be it was so increased inwardly through their contemplations, that they needed not to intermeddle



meddle with external things for the bettering their charity ; nor did it belong to their state of life, to seek after such externall workings , nor to intermeddle therewith , there being no necessity nor obligation for it on them ; And so their internal charity sufficed for them. But those, whom before I mentioned, that were in Prelacy , and others also that were holy secular men, had perfect charity, both interiorly in their affection , and did also exercise the same exteriorly in bodily working or deeds , and such doing is properly the mixt life which I have spoken of, consisting of the active and contemplative both together. And surely for such men that are in spiritual superiority, or have charge of the soules of others , as Prelates , Pastors, and Curates have , or that are in temporal authority in the government of others, as worldly Lords and Masters are , I hold this mixt life best, and most expedient or necessary for them , so long as they remaine in the said superiority and charge over others. But as for others that are free , and not obliged to any ministration , or superiority, temporal or spiritual , I judge, that the contemplative life alone by it selfe ( if they have grace and calling to it ) were , in truth, the best, the most expedient, most meritorious, most faire, and most worthy for them to use, and not willingly to leave it for any outward working of the active life, unless it were in case of great need, as for the helping or comforting of some other men , either in their bodies, or in their soules ; and need requiring it , he to go about the doing of it , either when the party, or some other for him requesteth , and traveth at his hands the doing of it ; or that himselfe sees a meer necessity in the case , or else ( being religious ) when he is bidden by his superiour to undertake or intermeddle with the work.



## CHAP. VI.

*What kinde of life was most fitting for him, for whom  
this Treatise was made.*

**B**Y that which I have said, thou mayest partly understand the differences between one and another of the aforesaid three kinds of lives; and thou mayest by what I have said, also judge which of them best fitteth thee, since that our Lord hath ordained and set thee in a state of superiority (of such nature as it is) and authority over others, and hath lent thee some store of worldly goods and lands, by the which thou mayst not only maintain and sustain thy selfe, but also all those other special persons, that are under thy authority and government, and mightest withal govern them according to thy best knowledge and ability; and therewith also thou hast, through the goodnesse of our Lord, received from him the grace for to know thy selfe, and a spiritual desire and taste of his love. I am of the minde, that the life which I have termed to be mixt, is best, and most besitting thee, and thou accordingly to divide and dispoite of thy time wisely, and to the satisfaction of the foresaid rule of charity. For know thou well, that if thou leave the necessary businesse or the active life belonging to thee, and be carelesse, and take no heed of thy worldly goods, as how they be kept or spent, nor lookest after those that pertain to thy charge to see they do well, nor wilt afford thy helpe upon the necessity of thy christian brother by reason of thy love, and desire thou hast to apply thy selfe onely to solitude, and spirituall exercises, imagining that by so doing thou art excused and freed from thy foresaid obligations: If (I say) thou do so, thou dost not wisely nor profitably for thy soule, for what are thy workes or exercises worth

worth (be they spirituall or corporall) unlesse they be done according to justice and reason, to the honour of God, and agreeable to his will, surely they are even nothing worth. Therefore if thou leave or neglect that thing, which thou art bound unto by the law of charity, justice, or other obligation, and wilt intirely give thee to another thing, voluntarily taken on thee, under pretence of better pleasing and serving of God, in a thing which thou art not bound unto, in so doing, thou dost no discreet or acceptable service to him: In so doing thou art carefull to do honour and worship to his head, and to his face, and to decke and adorn them fairly and curiously, but thou neglectest and leavest his body, with the feet, ragged and rent, and takest no care nor heed of them, nor dost thou any thing honour him, and it is but a shame, and an indignity, and no kinde of honour, for a man to be curiously dressed, and decked about his head with Pearles and precious stones, and therewith to have all his body naked and bare, as it were a beggar: Even so spirituallly, it is no honour to God, for one to crown his head, and leave his body bare; for thou must understand, that our Lord Jesus Christ, as a man, is the head of his spiritual body, which is the holy Church, the members or limbes of his body are all Christian men, some are armes, some are feet, and some are other members, according to the qualities, condition, or estates they are of in the holy Church. And now if thou be diligent with all thy skill and ability for to decke and adorn his head, that is, for to honour him with the remembrance of his passion, and of his other workes done in his humanity, with devotion, love, and thanks to him for the same, and forgettest or neglectest his feete (which are thy children, thy servants, thy tenants, and all thy christian brethren) and lettest them to decay or perish for want of looking to, or to want clothing sufficient, or other necessities, or otherwise not looked unto, and provided for as they ought to be,

be, then dost thou not please him, nor doest him any honour, thou seemest to kisse his mouth by devotion and spiritual prayer, but thou treadest upon his feet, and defilest them, inasmuch as thou wilt not tend to them (through thy negligence) that belong to thy charge and care. This is my opinion and advice to thee in this point; nevertheless if thou be of the mind that I say not a right in this matter, for that thou thinkest it were a fairer and more pleasing office to God, for to do honour to his head, as to be all day devoutly thinking of his passion, and producing acts of inward affection upon it, then for to go home to other works that are more external, & make clean his feet, as for to employ thy selfe both in words and deeds about the helping or benefiting of thy christian brethren, in so thinking thou thinkest amisse, and mistakest: For surely he will more thank thee, and reward thee for the humble washing of his feet when they are very soule, and yeeld an ill savour to thee, than for all the curious painting, and fair dressing or decking that thou canst make about his head, by the devoutest remembrance of his humanity; for it is faire enough, and needeth not much decking or dressing from thee; but for his feet, and other his limbs that are sometimes ill arrayed, and have need to be holpen by thee (namely fithence thou art bound thereto) our Lord will render thee more thanks, if thou wilt humbly and charitably look unto them: For the lower or meaner that the service which thou dost to thy Lord seemeth to be, in regard they are performed towards his members, and not immediately towards himselfe, yet doing it for the love of him, when reasonable occasions or need require it, and that with a cheerfull and humble heart, thou much more pleasest him, then in service immediately done to himselfe, with omission of these offices of need or charity towards thy christian brethren. And that thou mayest be the more willing to go about such an employment, thou shalt do well to think that it is sufficient, and best of all for thee to be employed in the very least degree, and lowest estate



## *The Scale of Perfection.*

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state of his service, especially since it is his will that it be so. For thou must thinke, that since he hath put thee into that charge & estate of life, that it is the very best for thee, and that thou canst not do better, than in performing what belong thereto in the best manner, and with all the willingnesse and gladnesse of minde that thou art able: This I tell thee not, as though that already thou dost it not, and better too, but to the end, that thou shouldst do it with more alacrity and cheerfulness, by occasion of this my writing; and shouldst not thinke it much sometimes to lessen or forbear thy spiritual exercise for to go and deal in worldly affaires pertaining to thee and thy estate, as to the looking and seeing too, that thy goods be well kept and spent according to reason, looking to the behaviours of thy servants, and thy tenants, and doing other good deeds towards thy christian brethren according to thy ability and their need, but shouldst performe both these works and exercises, that is to say, the internal and external. at divers and severall times, and with as good a will the one as the other, so far as thou canst. As for example, if thou hast been at thy prayer and spiritual exercise; that finished, thou shalt go and busie thy selfe in some corporal or external doing concerning thy christian brethren, and therefore spend reasonable time with willingness and gladnesse of minde: And after that thou hast been busily employed for a time about thy servants, and other men with whom thou shalt have occasions, and hast profitably spent with them so much time as shall be truly needful, thou shalt then break from these external doings, and shalt return againe to thy prayers and devotions, which thou shalt perform according to the grace that God shall give thee for it; and so doing, thou, by the grace of our Lord, shalt put away and avoid sloth, laziness, idleness, and vaine rest, which often creep upon us through the deceitfulness of our nature, under pretense or colour of contemplation, or other spiritual recollections; whereby we come to omit the performance of good and meritorious external



nall affaires and businesſes, pertaining to us and our charge, by the appointment or providence of God. And thus thou ſhalt be alwayes in ſome good exerciſe or other, internall or externall, by turnes, and in their proper times : Therefore thou ſhalt doe well to obſerve and do that ſpiritually, that is, in thy carriage in a ſpiritual life, which *Jacob* did in a matter that was onely corporall or externall. The holy Scripture telleth, how that *Jacob*, when he began to ſerve his Maſter *Laban*, he coveted *Rachell* his Maſters daughter for her fairneſſe, to be his Wiſe, and for the having of her he ſerved ſeven yeares ; but when he had thought for to have had her to his Wiſe, he had firſt *Leah*, the other daughter in ſtead of *Rachell*, and afterwards he takes *Rachell*, and ſo he had both at the laſt. By *Jacob* in holy Scripture is underſtood, an overcomer of finnes ; by thoſe two Wives are underſtood, as Saint *Gregory* ſaith, the two kindes of lives that are in the holy Church, which are the active life, and the contemplative life ; *Leah* is as much to ſay, as labour and painefull working, and betokeneth the active life : *Rachell* is as much as to ſay, as a ſight of the beginning, which is God, and betokeneth the contemplative life : *Leah* bare children, but ſhe was fore eyed ; *Rachel* was fair and lovely, but ſhe was barren : And now even as *Jacob* coveted *Rachel* for her fairneſſe, and yet had her not when he would, but firſt tooke *Leah*, and afterwards *Rachel* : Even ſo every man labouring, and heartily ſeeking ( by compunction for his former great finnes of the fleſh and of the world ) now to become a new ſervant to God in cleannesse of good living, hath a great deſire to have and come by *Rachell*, which is to have reſt in ſpiritual ſweetneſſe, devotion, and Contemplation, for it is ſo fair, and ſo lovely a life, that in hope for to have it, he determined with himſelfe, by the grace of our Lord, for to ſerve him with all his diligence and might ; but oft-times when he thinketh to have *Rachel*, that is, reſt in Devotion, our Lord ſuffereth him

him to be well exercised and tryed, either with the temptations of the World, or of the Devill, or of his flesh, or else with some externall busineses and doing, corporall or spiritual, in helpe or succour of his Christian brethren; and when he is thus well exercised, and in travells with *Leah*, and is well nigh overcome, then our LORD giveth him *Rachel*, that is, grace, and devotion, and rest in conscience, and then hath he both *Rachel* and *Leah*; so shalt thou doe, according to the example of *Jacob*, these two lives, active and contemplative, since God calleth and enableth thee for both, and use the one with the other of them: By the one life (which is the active) thou shalt bring forth the fruit of many good deeds in helpe of thy Christian brethren: and by the other shalt thou be made to become faire, clear sighted, and clean in the supream brightness and beauty, which is God, the beginner and ender of all that is made; and then shalt thou be truly *Jacob*, and an out-goer and overcomer of all sinnes; and after that, by the grace of God, thy name shall be changed, as *Jacobs* name was, and turned into *Israel*, and *Israel* is as much as to say, a man seeing God: Therefore if thou be first *Iacob*, and wilt discreetly use these two lives afterwards, in time thou shalt be *Israel*, that is, a true Contemplative, either in this life, if God will deliver thee, and make thee free from the charges and busineses which thou art bound to, or else after this life, fully and perfectly in the blisse of heaven when thou comest thither. A man shall desire a contemplative life, for it is faire and full of merit, therefore thou shalt ever have it in thy minde, and in thy desire; but thou shalt have in *using* active life, for it is both expedient and necessary. Therefore if upon just occasions, either concerning thy children, or thy servants, or any other of thy christian brethren, for their profit, or their hearts ease, upon reasonable cause, asking it of thee, thou be put from thy rest in devotion, when thou hadst much rather stay still there-

at, be not angry with them, nor heavy or sad within thy selfe, so tarre as thou art able to helpe it, nor afraid, as if God would be angry with thee, that thou leavest him for any other bulinesse or doing, for he will not be angry, but well pleased and delighted thou so do: And therefore in such a case, readily leave off thy devotion or what kinde soever it be, and go about the deed, being service to thy christian brethren, and that as willingly and readily, as if our Lord himselfe had called and bidden thee to go about it: do so, I say, and endure the difficulty thou findest in it for his love: and put away all grudging about it, so far as thou canst; as also all bitternesse and offence taken against thy christian brother for calling thee to the said employment.

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CHAP. VII.

*That a mans devotion sometimes will be the greater, by reason of the outward worke, which before out of charity he had been in hand with.*

**A**N D it may fall out sometimes, that the greater trouble thou hast exteriorly had in doing of thy active works, the more inflamed desire shalt thou afterwards have to God, and the more sight of God and spiritual things, through the grace of our Lord, in devotion when thou comest thereto; for it saith thereby, as if thou hadst a little cole of fire, and wouldst make a fire therewith, and make it burne; thou wouldst first lay to some sticks, and with them over-cover the cole, so that there is as yet no shew or seeming hope of fire by it, neverthelesse when thou hast abiden a while, and afterwards blowest it a little; anon, suddenly there will arise out a great flame of fire, so that the sticks will be turned all into fire; Even-so is it spiritually, thy will and thy desire that thou hast to God, is, as it were, a little cole of fire in thy

thy soule, for it giveth to thee some-what of light, and of spiritual heat ; but it is very little that it giveth, for often it waxeth cold, and turneth to a fleshly rest ( or into a rest in flesh and sensuality ) and sometimes into idleneffe, and doing of no good ; therefore it is expedient, that thou put to sticks, that is, some works of the active life ; and though it be so, that those workes do seem for a time to be a let to thy desire, so that it may not be so intire, nor so fervent as thou wouldst it were, yet be not daunted nor troubled thereat, but abide and suffer a while, and so blow at the fire ; that is, first go and do thy works, and afterwards go alone to thy prayers and devotions, and lift up thine heart to God, and pray him, that of his goodnesse he will accept thy works that thou doest, and receive them to his honour and glory, hold them as nothing in thine own sight, nor to be of any worth, save so farre as God onely out of his goodnesse shall vouchsafe to accept of them ; humbly acknowledge thy wretchednesse and frailty, really attributing thy good deeds to him, for so much as they have any goodnesse in them, and inasmuch as they are bad, or not done discreetly, with all circumstances requisite for a good deed, ascribe them to thy selfe, and then for this humility shall all thy good deeds turn into a flame of fire, as do sticks laid upon a cole, and thou thus doing, thy external good deeds shall not hinder thy Devotion, but rather encrease it. And moreover, our Lord saith in holy Scripture thus ; *Fire shall alwayes burne in my Altar, and the Priest rising up in the morning shall put wood thereunto, so that the fire may not be extinguished.* This fire is love and desire to GOD in a soule, the which fire requireth, that it be nourished and maintained by laying to sticks, so that it may not go out ; and these sticks are of divers matters, as some of one kinde of wood, and some of another. A man that is learned, and hath some understanding in the holy Scripture, if he have this fire of devotion in his heart, it is good for him to get him sticks of holy examples and devout prayers, and nourish the fire with them. Another



ther man that is unlearned cannot so readily have at hand the sayings of holy Scripture, or of Doctors for the purpose; and therefore it is necessary for him to doe many good externall deeds to his Christian brethren, and thereby maintaine and exercise towards them the love he beareth them for God. And so it is good, that each man in his degree, and according to what is most agreeable to the benefit and disposition of his soule, doe get him stickes of one thing or another, as either by praying, considering, meditating, or reading in some good & devout Book, or in doing of some corporall or externall worke, thereby for to nourish in his soule the fire of love, so that it may not become quenched; for the affection of love is dainty and tender, and will easily goe out and vanish away, unlesse it be well kept, and continually nourished by good deeds or exercises corporall or spirituall. Now therefore since our Lord hath put into thine heart a little sparkle of this blessed fire, that is, *himselfe* (as holy Scripture saith) *our Lord is a consuming fire*; For as a materiall fire wasteth all bodily things that may be wasted, so a spiritual fire, that is God, wasteth all kinde of sinne, and therefore our Lord is likened to fire wasting: I pray thee to nourish this fire within thee: This fire is nothing else but Love and Charity: This hath he sent into the earth, as he saith in the Gospel, *I came to send fire into the earth, and to what end, but that it might burne*; that is, God hath put into mans soule a fire of love, and a good desire, and a great good will for to please him, and that he hath done to this end, that man should know it, keepe it, and nourish it, and strengthen and increase it, and thereby be saved. The greater desire that thou hast to him and for him, the greater is the fire of love in thee, and the lesse that the desire is in thee, the lesse is the fire. The quantity or measure of thy desire within thee, how much it is, neither thy selfe doth know, nor doth any man know how great it is in him, much lesse the quantity of love that is in another man, God onely

onely knoweth it, or he to whom God shall reveal and make it known. And therefore dispute not with thy selfe, as if thou wouldest know how great thy desire is; be busie and serious to desire as much as thou canst, but not to know the quantity or measure of thy desire.

## CHAP. VIII.

*What the desire of God for himselfe is, and how that in cleannesse of conscience is found true comfort and sweetnesse.*

**S**aint Augustine saith, that the life of every good Christian man is a continuall desire to God, and such desire is of great power and vertue, for it is a great crying in the eares of God; the more fervently thou desirest, the higher thou cryest, the better thou prayest, and the wiser are thy thoughts. And what is this desire? Surely nothing but a lothing of all this worldly blisse, a forsaking of all fleshly or sensuall love in thine heart, and an exream love, with a most hungry longing and thirsting after God, and the everlasting blisse of heaven: this is that may be called a desire of God for himselfe: If thou hast this desire, as I verily hope and believe that thou hast, I pray thee keepe it well, and nourish it diligently, and when thou shalt pray or meditate of God, make this desire of him to be the beginning and finall intention of such thy exercises, and of all other thy works and deeds, thereby to encrease it. Seek and nourish onely this, and seeke not after any feeling in thy corporall senses, externall or internall, nor any sensible sweetnesse or devotion, neither by the ear, nor by the taste of thy pallate, nor by any wonderfull light or sight of thy eyes, nor seek the sight of Angels, no, though our Lord himself would appear in his body to the sight of thy eyes, make no great matter of that; and

and therefore let all thy diligence be, that thou mayest truly and really perceiue and finde in thy soule, and especially in thy will, a loathing and full forsaking of all manner of sinne, and of all manner of uncleanness, with a spiritual seeing or perceiving, how soule, how ugly, and how painfull these things be : and that thou mayest have within thee a mighty desiring of vertues, and namely, of humility, and charity, and finally, of the blisse of heaven. This that I shall now tell thee, were ( as I would thinke ) a spiritual comfort, and a spiritual sweetnesse in a mans soule ; and that is, to have cleannesse in conscience from wickednesse, and from all worldly vanities, with a firme Faith, and humble hope, and a full desire of God. Howsoever it be for having of other comforts and sweetnesse, I esteem that sweetnesse to be true, sound, and secure, that is felt in cleannesse of conscience, with a strong will of forsaking and loathing of all sinnes, and with inward sight and fervent desire of spiritual things : all other comforts and sweetnesse caused by any manner of feelings, unlesse they lead or help to the said end, that is, to cleannesse of conscience, and spiritual desire of God, are not secure to rest on.

But now thou wilt perhaps aske, *whether this desire be love to God ?*

As to that I answer and say, That this desire is not properly love, but a beginning and taste of love, for love properly is a perfect uniting and coupling together of the lover and the loved into one : Perfect love maketh God and the soule to be, as if they both together were but one thing. But such perfect coupling and union may not be had in this life, but onely in desire and longing thereto, as by the example that I shall now deliver thee : If a man love another man that is absent, he greatly desireth his presence : Even so spiritually, as long as we are in this life, our Lord is absent from us, so that here we may neither see him, nor feel him as he is, and therefore are not able ( for want of such sight and feeling ) here to love him, in fulnesse, and perfection, and in reality as we might do,  
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if we had the sight of him really, and as he is in his owne being; the which, because we have not, nor shall have in this life, therefore all that we can do here is, to have a desire and a great longing and thirsting for to be present with him, and see him in his blisse, and to be fully and perfectly united unto him in love. This desire we may have in us (of his gift) in this life, by the which we shall be saved, for it is love unto him, such as may here be had. Saint Paul saith thus, *We know that while we are in this body, we are pilgrims* (or strangers) *from God*; That is, we abide in this earth, or banishment, absent from heaven, for we here walke by faith and not by sight (that is, we here live in faith, not in reall sight of him as he is) but we are bold, and have a good will, rather to be absent from the body, and to be present to our Lord (that is, we through cleanness of conscience, and sure trust of salvation, dare desire parting from our body by bodily death, and thereupon be present to our Lord, neverthelesse because as yet we may not) therefore we endeavour, whether present or absent, to please him; that is, we strive against the sins of the world, and pleasures of the flesh, and sensuality. by desire to him, seeking to burn and consume in the fire of such our desire, all things that may let or hinder us from him.

But thou wilt perhaps further aske me, *Whether a man may continually have this desire in his heart?* and thou perhaps thinkest that he cannot.

As to that I will answer, according to my opinion in it, which is, that thou mayest have this desire in thine heart and intention, virtually or habitually, always and continually; but thou canst not so have it, as to working or exercising upon it, as thou mayest better understand by this example; If thou wert sicke, thou wouldst have, as every man in such a case hath, continually a naturall desire in thine heart of bodily health; and this whether thou be asleep or awake, but art thinking of some worldly things, thou hast then such a desire, onely in intention or habit, and not in using



using or acting upon it : But when thou thinkest on thy bodily sicknesse, or on thy health, then halt thou thy said desire of health in using and acting: Even so it is spiritually in the desire of God ; He, who by the gift of God hath this desire, though he sleepe, or else thinketh not on God, but on some other worldly things, yet hath he this desire in his heart and soule, till he commit some deadly sinne : But as soone as he thinketh on God, or purity of life, or the joyes of Heaven, then his desire to God worketh actually ; As long as he keepeth his thought and intention to please God, either in prayers, meditations, or any other good action ; so that all his endeavour be to excite this desire, and discreetly use it sometimes in one deed, sometimes in another, according as he is disposed, and hath grace thereto. This desire is the roote of all thy actions that are rewardable. For what-ever good deed thou doest for Gods sake, whether it be bodily or spiritual, as when thou prayest or meditatest, it is an exercising and using of this desire ; And therefore when thou dost any good worke, scruple not whether thou desirest God or no, for thy deed sheweth thy desire. Some ignorantly conceive that they desire not God except they be ever calling upon him either with their mouths, or their hearts ; and therefore they are continually saying, *Lord save me*, or some such like words ; which words indeed are good, because they stirre up the heart to a desiring of God ; Yet neverthelesse without any such words a pure thought of God, or any spiritual thing, or of vertue, or the humanity of Christ, or joyes of Heaven, or understanding of the holy Scriptures, with love, may be better then such words ; And the more spirituall thy thought is, the more is thy desire. Be not therefore in doubt whether thou desirest God when thou thinkest upon him, or doest any outward good worke to thy Neighbour, for thy deeds shew it. Neverthelesse though all thy good actions spirituall and corporall  
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are a demonstration of thy desire to God, yet is there a great difference between spiritual and corporal deeds, for deeds of a *Contemplative* life are not so outward as the other; and therefore when thou prayest unto, or meditatest upon God, thy desire to him is more entire, more fervent, more spiritual, then when thou doest externall workes of charity to thy Neighbour.

Now if thou aske mee, by what meanes thou shalt keepe this desire, and nourish it? I shall tell a little in that point, not with the meaning that thou shalt or must use the selfe-same forme that I tell thee for it; but that thou thereby have some kinde of generall example, whereof thou shalt make use upon thy neede, and according to thy manner, not my manner, unlesse mine seeme more for thy purpose, for I neither may nor can tell thee fully what is best for thee to use; but I shall tell thee some-what according to what I thinke.

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CHAP. IX.

*How thou shalt dispose thee to devotion.*

**I**N the night after thy sleepe, if thou wilt rise to pray and serve our Lord, thou shalt feel thy selfe at the first to be fleshly, heavy, and as it were drowned in sensuality, and oft times impertinent thoughts of the

the world or other vanities pressing into thy minde : But then shalt thou dispose thee to pray, or to thinke some good thought, for to revive and quicken thine heart towards God, and do thou use all thy discreet industry, for the drawing up of thy thoughts from worldly vanities, and from vaine imaginations that come into thy minde, that so thou mayest feele some devotion in such vocall prayers as thou shalt then use, if thou use any such ; or else ( if thou wilt ) enter thou into some spiritual thoughts, whereby thou mayest not remain hindred and troubled with such vaine thoughts of the world, or of thy flesh. And now as for matter of good thoughts for thee, thou must know, that there be divers matters of such thoughts or meditations, but which of them were best for thee to take and use, I cannot tell thee ; But I trow, that such matter and manner of thinking or meditating, wherein thou feelest greatest gust, facility, and ease, or pleasure, is best for thee to use, so long as it continueth so gratefull to thy spirit. Thou mayest ( if thou wilt ) sometime thinke on thy finnes heretofore committed, and of the frailties into which thou daily fallest, and ask mercy and forgiveness for them. Also after this thou mayest think on the frailties, and finnes, and miseries, corporal and spiritual, of thy Christian brethren, with pittie and compassion of them, and aske mercy and forgiveness for them as tenderly as for thy selfe, and as if thou hadst done them, and that is a good exercise for the time. **Ex.** I tell thee for truth, that thou mayest make of other mens sins a precious oyntment for to heal thine owne soule, when thou thinkest on them with compassion and sorrow for them ; this oyntment is precious & very medicinable, though the spicery or things whereof it is composed, be not clean, or otherwise wholsome ; for it is Triacle or Methridate made of poyson for to doe away and destroy poyson ; that is to say, thine owne and other mens finnes : If thou beat and bruise them well with sorrow of thine heart, pittie and compassion, they turne into Triacle or Methridate

date, that will cleanse and make whole thy soule from pride and envy, and bring into it love and charity to thy Christian brethren: Such thought is good for thee sometimes to take into thee.

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## CHAP. X.

*How a man is to thinke on the humanity of Christ.*

**A**lso for thy exercise of devotion, thou mayest think upon the humanity of our Lord, as of his birth, or of his passion, or of any other of his works, and feed thy thought with spirituall imagination thereof, for to move thine affection more to the love of him. This thought (I mean, of something of our Saviours humanity) is good and expedient, namely, when it cometh freely of Gods gift, with devotion and servour of spirit, else a man will not likely finde taste or devotion in it: And if he have it not with such facility and sending of God, I think it not expedient, that a man should much force himself in it, as if he would get it by violence; for so doing, he might hurt his head and body too, and yet be never the near: Therefore I thinke that it is good for a man to have in his minde and thought, sometimes our Saviours humanity, or some matter thereof, and if devotion come withall and relish, or gust found in it, then to hold it, and follow it for a time, but leave off soon, and hang not long thereon. And if devotion come not by thinking of the passion, strive not, nor presse too much for to have and come by such devotion or feeling in it, but take what will easily come; and if it come not easily, betake thee to some other matter, wherein thou thinkest or hopest to finde more devotion or gust.

CHAP.



## CHAP. XI.

*How a man shall thinke on Vertues, and upon the Saints.*

**A**Lso other thoughts there be that are more spiritual, as to think on vertues, and to see by light of understanding the vertue of humility, what it is, and what great reasons be why a man should be humble; and also what is patience, cleanness in soule, justice, charity, sobriety, and other such like vertues; and how worthy it is, that a man should labour for the getting of them, and of the meanes by which they may be gotten, and by such thoughts to have a great desire and longing to the having of those vertues; and also for to have a spiritual sight of the three principall, or Theological Vertues, Faith, Hope, and Charity. By the sight and desire of these Vertues a soule should see and feele much grace of our Lord, without which grace a mans soule is halfe blind, and without spiritual sweetnesse or taste. Also for to think on the Saints, as the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and holy Virgins, beholding in his interiour their holy living, and the grace and vertues that our Lord gave them in their life, and by the remembrance and consideration hereof, to stir thy heart for to take example from them, for leading a better and perfecter life.

## CHAP. XII.

*How a man shall thinke of the holinesse of our Lord Jesus, and of our blessed Lady.*

**A**Lso the thinking and considering (above all other Saints) of our Lady St. Mary, and her excellency in grace and vertues, is a good matter for raising

sing and exercise of devotion, by seeing with thy spiritual eye the abundance of grace that was in her holy soule, when she was here living, which our Lord had given her, above what he gave to any of the other Saints; for she was replenished with all other vertues, without one spot of sinne, shewing and manifesting by her life perfect humility, and fulness of charity, with the beauty and excellency of all other vertues, the which vertues altogether made her so holy, that there would no temptation, or motion of pride, envy, wrath, or anger, sensuall delight, or of any other kind of sin, or imperfection enter into her heart, or defile her soul in any part of it. By the beholding of the beauty and excellency of this blessed soule, a mans heart should be moved and put into a great spiritual delight and comfort. And much more than above that, is the beholding of the soul of our Lord Jesus, the which soul of his was fully and wholly united to the divinity, excellling without any comparifon, our blessed Lady and all other creatures. For in the passion of Jesus are two natures, that is, God & man perfectly united together by the vertue of this most blessed union, which cannot be expressed, nor yet conceived by mans wit or understanding; the soul of Jesus hath received the perfection and fulness of all wisdom and goodness; as the Apostle saith, *The fulnesse of the divinity doth dwell in Christ corporally*; that is, the divinity of God was fully united to the humanity (or mans nature) in the soule of Jesus, and so by the meanes of his soul dwelling in his body, the remembrance of the humanity of our Lord after this manner (that is, to regard the vertues and surpassing grace of the soule of Jesus) should be right comfortable to a mans soule.

## CHAP. XI.

*How a man shall thinke on Vertues, and upon the Saints.*

**A**Lso other thoughts there be that are more spiritual, as to think on vertues, and to see by light of understanding the vertue of humility, what it is, and what great reasons be why a man should be humble; and also what is patience, cleanness in soule, justice, charity, sobriety, and other such like vertues; and how worthy it is, that a man should labour for the getting of them, and of the meanes by which they may be gotten, and by such thoughts to have a great desire and longing to the having of those vertues; and also for to have a spiritual sight of the three principall, or Theological Vertues, Faith, Hope, and Charity. By the sight and desire of these Vertues a soule should see and seele much grace of our Lord, without which grace a mans soule is halfe blind, and without spiritual sweetnesse or taste. Also for to think on the Saints, as the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and holy Virgins, beholding in his interiour their holy living, and the grace and vertues that our Lord gave them in their life, and by the remembrance and consideration hereof, to stir thy heart for to take example from them, for leading a better and perfecter life.

## CHAP. XII.

*How a man shall thinke of the holinesse of our Lord Jesus, and of our blessed Lady.*

**A**Lso the thinking and considering (above all other Saints) of our Lady St. Mary, and her excellency in grace and vertues, is a good matter for raising

sing and exercise of devotion, by seeing with thy spiritual eye the abundance of grace that was in her holy soule, when she was here living, which our Lord had given her, above what he gave to any of the other Saints; for she was replenished with all other vertues, without one spot of sinne, shewing and manifesting by her life perfect humility, and fulness of charity, with the beauty and excellency of all other vertues, the which vertues altogether made her so holy, that there would no temptation, or motion of pride, envy, wrath, or anger, sensuall delight, or of any other kind of sin, or imperfection enter into her heart, or defile her soul in any part of it. By the beholding of the beauty and excellency of this blessed soule, a mans heart should be moved and put into a great spiritual delight and comfort. And much more than above that, is the beholding of the soul of our Lord Jesus, the which soul of his was fully and wholly united to the divinity, excellling without any comparifon, our blessed Lady and all other creatures. For in the passion of Jesus are two natures, that is, God & man perfectly united together by the vertue of this most blessed union, which cannot be expressed, nor yet conceived by mans wit or understanding; the soul of Jesus hath received the perfection and fulness of all wisdom and goodness; as the Apostle saith, *The fulnesse of the divinity doth dwell in Christ corporally*; that is, the divinity of God was fully united to the humanity (or mans nature) in the soule of Jesus, and so by the meanes of his soul dwelling in his body, the remembrance of the humanity of our Lord after this manner (that is, to regard the vertues and surpassing grace of the soule of Jesus) should be right comfortable to a mans soule.



## CHAP. XIII.

*Of seeing and beholding the power, (by some consideration or thinking) the wisdom, the goodness, and the mercy of God in his Creatures.*

**A**Lso the remembrance of the power, the wisdom and the goodness of our Lord in all his creatures for as much as we living here on earth, cannot see God fully, and as he is in his essence, therefore we are to see and behold him, love and fear him, upon the sight and consideration of his creatures and his works; and in them also are we to admire and wonder at his power and goodnesse: Also for to thinke on the mercy of our Lord, that he hath shewed to me and to thee, and to all sinfull captives, that sometimes were in bondage to the Devill, through the greatnesse and multitude of our sins; how he patiently suffered us to live in our sin, and in our heynous contempts of him, and work no revenge on us for the same, as he most justly might have done, and might most worthily have cast us down head-long into hell, if his love had not hindered him; but out of love he spared us, and sent his grace into our souls, taking us out of the state of heynous sinnes, and by his grace hath turned our will entirely unto him, and made us thereby, for the having of him, and for his love, to forsake all manner of sin. The remembrance of his mercy and goodnesse, in these and in other matters and points more and greater than I can now reckon up, may justly cause and bring into a soule a great trust and confidence in our Lord, and a full hope of salvation, and greatly inflameth the desire of love to aspire to the joyes of heaven.

CHAP. XIV.

*How the consideration and thinking on the miseries and perills of this life is apt to breed in a soul the desire of heaven.*

**A**Lso to think upon the miseries, mischieses, and perills, corporal and spiritual, that happen in this life, and after that to thinke of the joys of heaven, as how great happinesse is there, and what wonderfull joy and delight; for there is neither sin, nor sorrow, nor passion, nor pain, hunger, nor thirst, aches, nor sicknesse, doubt, nor feare, shame, nor blame, nor want of power, nor strength, nor lack of light, nor coldnesse in love; but there is most excellent beauty, cleannesse, strength, health, everlasting delights, perfect wisdome, love, peace, honour, security, rest, joy, and blisse in abundance, without ever having any end. The consideration of these points ought to cause thee the more fervently to covet and desire those everlasting joys and rest of that same most blessed life. Many men are covetous of worldly goods, honours, and earthly riches, and think both in dreaming and waking, how and by what meanes they might come thereto; and then they forget all care of their soules good, and all thoughts of the pains of hell, or of the joys of heaven; surely these men are not wise: they are like to children that run after Butter-flies, and because they look not to their feet, they sometimes easily fall down & breake their legs. What is all the pomp, honours, riches, and collity of this world but a Butter-flie? Surely it is no more, yea, it is much lesse: Therefore, I pray thee, be covetous of the joyes of heaven, and thou shalt have honour and riches that shall last for ever. For at the latter day, when worldly covetous men bring no good in their hands (because all their honour and riches, which they only made account of, are turned into nothing but sorrow and pain) then the good men of the

world, that have truly forsaken all vain honours & riches of this world, or else if they had them, they made no account in their hearts of them, nor did set their love or delight in them, but have ever lived in the peace of God, and in humility, and in hope, and sometimes in tribulations or afflictions, & patiently expected the mercy of God; they (I say) shall then fully attain that which they here coveted, for they shall be crowned as Kings, and shall ascend up with our Lord into the bliss of heaven. Also there be many other good considerations of these thoughts (more than I can speak of) that serve to stir the mind and raise a mans minde and affection to loath the vanities of this world, and to desire the joyes of heaven.

These matters I have not mentioned unto thee, although if I had withall fully shewed the manner how they are exercised in a mans soule; but I have onely touched them a little, to the end thou mightest, by so much the better understand these things, for such use as thou canst best make of them.

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## C H A P. XV.

*How a man shall do when he feeleth no taste nor comfort in his mentall exercises.*

**N**evertheless I would think it were good for thee, that when thou disposest thee to think on God, as I have before said, or in any other manner, and peradventure thou seekest no gust nor devotion in thy exercise, but onely a naked mind, and a weak will; by which thou wouldst fain think on God, but canst not; then I think it is good for thee, that thou strive not too much with thy selfe, for so thou mayest fall into a greater darkness, unlesse thou knowest how to worke more subtilly, and more above in spirit, and with all quietness in the senses: But thou not knowing how to do so for want of experience or skill in it, I hold it more secure for thee in such a case, for to say thy *Pater Noster*, and thine *Ave Maria*, or else thy *Mattins*, or to read in thy *Psalter*, for that is evermore a sure stand-  
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ward, that will not fail, who so may cleave thereto, he shall not erre: and if thou canst by thy prayer get devotion, look then that this devotion be only in affection, that is to say, in a great desire toward God, with a spiritual delight, hold on then such thy saying of those vocall prayers, and not easily break off; for oftentimes it happeneth, that praying with the mouth getteth and keepeth devotion, and if in such a case thou cease from saying, thy devotion withal vanisheth away.

Nevertheless, if *Devotion* in prayer bring into thine heart a devout thought of the humanity of our Lord, or of any of the other matters before mentioned by me, and this thought should be hindered by thy saying of the vocal prayers, then will it be best for thee to cease from thy saying, and to feed thy mind and affection with the thought of the said good matter, till it leave thee and be vanished away.

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## CHAP. XVI.

*What a man is to take heed of in his prayers and meditations.*

**B**Ut of certain things it behoveth thee to beware in thy meditations; of some of them I shall tell thee. One is, that when thou hast had a spiritual thought or imagination of the humanity of our Lord, or of other bodily things, and thy soule hath been comforted and fed therewith, and afterward it passeth away of it self; do not seek, as it were, by mastery, or force to hold it still, for then it will turn thee into pain and bitterness. Also if it pass not away, but dwell still in thy minde, without any travell or industry of thine, and thou for the comfort thou findest in it, wilt not leave it, and thereupon it still continuing with thee, cometh to be a reave or hinder thee of thy sleep at nights, or else in the day times hindereth thee from other good deeds, or else through the great fervour that it worketh in thy body, thy body or thine head by it falleth into a great feebleness; then must thou lessen or moderate, and  
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sometimes forbear such exercise of thine, even when thou hast most devotion in it, or to it, and wouldst otherwise be most loath to forbear it, or part from it; and therefore thou must needs use discretion in the matter, for to avoid those mischieses, or any of them, which now I have reckoned up to thee, or any other mischief or perill that may come to thee, through indiscreet servour or love to those thy exercises: and in particular, give it over when it is reasonable time to give it over, or when thy Christian brother may receive harm, or take just offence at thee, by occasion of thy long stay at such thy devotions. If thou doe otherwise in this matter than I have told thee, I think thou dost not well, nor wisely in it.

A worldly man or woman, that peradventure feeles not devotion twice in a year, if he (through the grace of our Lord Jesus) feeles great compunction for his sins, or think seriously or devoutly on the passion of our Lord, or upon any other good matter, if he by occasion thereof, and his devotion therein, be put from his sleep and his rest, for one, or two, or three nights, untill his head ake, it makes no great matter, nor will he be the worse for it; such devotion cometh but seldom upon such persons. But as for thee, or any other man or woman, that every day duly performeth, or hath such devotions, and intendest to continue in pursuing of such daily exercises, it is expedient for thee to use and hold discretion in thy performance of those thy exercises, and not fully to yeild and plunge thy selfe into devotion, so far as it will offer it selfe unto thee, but moderate thy self in it, and take it moderately, though it offer it selfe to thee in abundance.

Also I hold it good, that thou observe this discretion in thy exercise, which is, that thou tarry not too long at it, that thereby thou put thy selfe from taking thy meat, or of thy sleepe, when the time shall be for taking of them, or do give just cause of displeasure or damage to any other man, through occasion of overlong tarrying at such thy devotion: The wise man saith, *That all things have their time.*

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Another thing which becometh thee to beware of is, that when thy mind hath been employed for a time in the imagination of the humanity of our Saviour, or any other good matter, and after this thou seekest with all the desire of thine heart, for to have a more spiritual knowing or feeling of the divinity; presse not too much upon such desire, nor suffer the desire of thine heart to tarry too long therein, as if thou wert expecting and tarrying for some better or higher elevation of thy spirit, or for a feeling that had more worth or excellency in it than any thou hast hitherto had, thou shalt not do so. It is enough for thee & for me, for to have a desire and a longing to our Lord; and if he out of his grace and goodness will vouchsafe, over and above such desires of ours, freely, and of his own accord, to send us of his spiritual light, and open our spiritual eye, for to see or know more of him than heretofore he did or could, by our own labour and industry, let us thank him for it; but if he do not (because we are not as yet humble enough, but were likely to grow proud, by reason of such extraordinary favours, if he bestowed them on us) or are not disposed in other respects, and namely, by cleanness of conscience through well living, for to receive such grace and favour at his hands, then let us humbly acknowledge our own unworthiness, and hold our selves satisfied with the desire we have of him, and with other common good thoughts, that may easily be had and used by our imagination; as thinking of our sins, of Christs passion, or other such like things, or else with some vocall prayers of the Psalter, or other vocall prayers, and thank him with all our hearts, that he bestoweth upon us any portion of his grace or favour, though it be the least that any man hath. And if thou do otherwise, thou mayest easily be deceived (for thy presumption) by the spirit of error; for it is a great folly for a man of his own head or wilfulness, to presse or strain himselfe too much, to get into the sight or exercise of spirituall things, further than he seeth well that he hath invitation and enablement for it: For the wise man saith,

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saith, that *the searcher of the Majesty (of God) shall be oppressed by the glory of him*, for not having humility, cleanness, and worthiness in soule, for such a sight he shall be cast down, and made to know himself better then he did through this confusion. And therefore the same wise man in another place saith thus; *Do not seek for things that are higher, nor search into things that passe thy strength*: that is to say, high things that are above thy natural reason and apprehension seek not after, and great matters that are above thy ability or strength do not search into. By these words the wise man doth not wholly forbid us to seek after, and desire the knowing and having of spiritual and heavenly things, but he forbiddeth us to seeke for them in a preposterous manner, which is too soon, and sooner than we are fit for them, or that God calleth us to them, as when we are as yet sensuall, and not cleansed from the vain love of the world; being in that degree, we are not to take upon us, as if we could or would by our labour or industry, or by our own wit enable our selves to discern, see, or know spiritual things, or procure in us great fervour of the love of God; so that albeit we see, that we set at nought all worldly things, and it seem to us, that we would for Gods love forsake all the wealth, honours, and joyes of this world; yet for all this, we are unfit and indisposed for to seek and beholde spirituall things that are above us, untill our soules through precedent exercises of the imagination, become to be more subtile, or as it were thin, or somewhat spiritual, and withall he become well mortified and settled in vertues, by process of time, and by increase in grace: For (as St. Gregory saith) no man suddenly (or hastily) becometh supream or perfect in grace, but beginneth with little, and proceedeth on by little and little, untill that he come to be perfect, the which God grant that we all may one day be, Amen.

